SCARLET FORTUNE

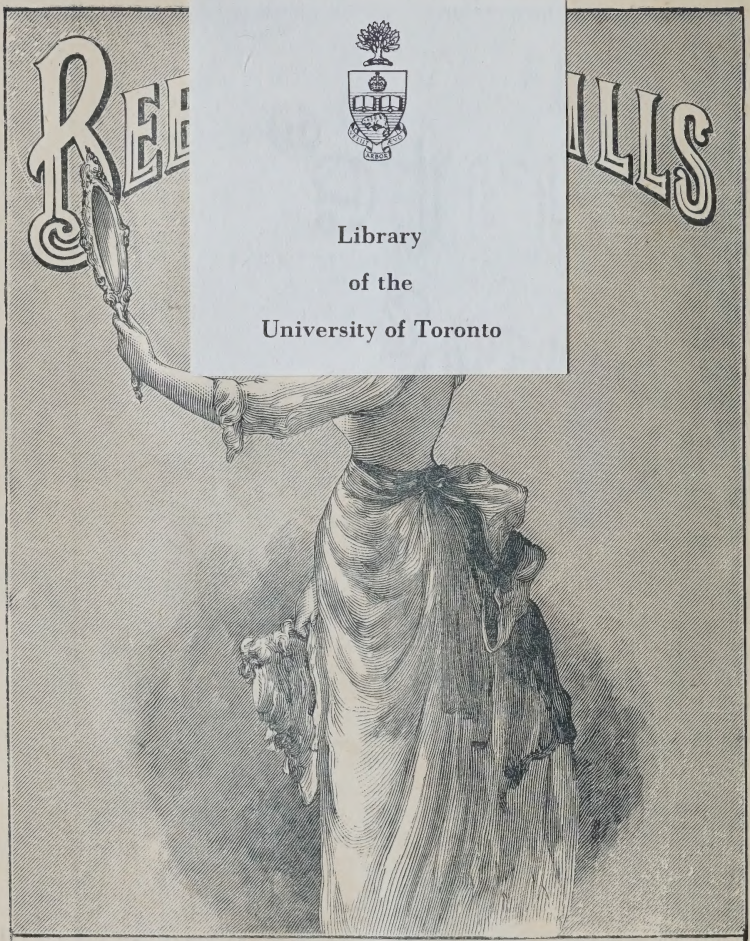
BY HENRY HERMAN

AUTHOR OF "EAGLE JOE" "THE SILVER KING" &c &c&c

TRISCHLER AND CO., LONDON

RB 17557

Library
of the
University of Toronto



'Tis even so! the doctor told me true!
My cheek resumes its healthy, rosebud, hue:
My every pulse with sense of vigour thrills;
And all the debt is due to BEECHAM'S PILLS!

For days I've feared to look, my glass, at you,
Through eyes so dull, a skin of such sad hue:
To-day, the mirror that my visage fills,
Seems magical; but, ah! the magic's from the PILLS!

BEECHAM'S PILLS act like magic, bringing back the Rosebud of Health.

EASE, STRENGTH, AND DURABILITY.

BLENKIRON'S
BRITISH ARGOSY
BRACES

(PATENTED).

The Best
Self-Adjusting Brace
in the World.

GIVES TO EVERY MOVEMENT OF THE BODY.

Contains no Rubber, the Cords Running on Pulleys.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED BY THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

It throws back the shoulders and expands the chest.

A LASTING FAVOURITE WITH ALL WEARERS.

OF ALL HOSIERS AND DRAPERS.

WHELPTON'S
VEGETABLE
PURIFYING PILLS

The best Family Medicine. Recommended for HEADACHES, BILE, INDIGESTION, and **OBSTINATE CONSTIPATION**; also in **RHEUMATISM,** and all **SKIN DISEASES,** these Pills being a **DIRECT PURIFIER OF THE BLOOD.**

WHELPTON'S
PILLS & OINTMENT

WHELPTON'S
HEALING OINTMENT

Stands unrivalled for the cure of **CUTS, BURNS, BRUISES, ULCERS, SORES,** and all kinds of **SKIN DISEASE.** A Specific for **ECZEMA.**

Burns, Scalds, Cuts, &c., happen when least expected—BePrepared! Both Pills and Ointment are Sold in Boxes, price 7½d., 1 1½, and 2 9, by all Medicinevendors at home&abroad, post free 8,14or 33 stamps

8613

G. WHELPTON & SON,
3, Crane Court, Fleet Street, E.C.

Henry Herman, novelist, has collaborated with D. C. Murray in several works of fiction. The book contains a second story by the same author "The Outlaws of White-Water Gulch."

SCARLET FORTUNE.

THE GOLDEN LAKE:

A Story of Australian Adventure.

BY

W. CARLTON DAWE,

Author of "Zantha," &c.

WITH EIGHT FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

HUME NISBET.

Morning Post:—"A welcome addition to the fiction treating of 'The Great Lone Land of Australia,' the effect of which is increased by Mr. Hume Nisbet's numerous illustrations."

Sunday Times:—"A very strong and well-written story of Australian life, told with a swing and 'go' which make it very entertaining reading."

Scotsman:—"A clever and entertaining narrative of travelling adventures in the unknown interior of Australia. Mr. Dawe's inventive talent is lively, and his literary faculty genuine."

ONE VOLUME.

Extra Cloth, with Bevelled Boards, Six Shillings.

To

A Woman as true as Lucy.

to

My dear little Wife.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

PRIZE NOVEL

THE ONLY WITNESS:

WHAT DID SHE SEE?

BY

E. J. GOODMAN.

Every Purchaser will have a Chance of Winning

FIRST PRIZE	£30
SECOND PRIZE	£15
THIRD PRIZE	£5

Offered by the Publishers for the best solution of the mystery of the story.

The *Daily Telegraph* says, "The story is keenly exciting throughout, and the author has used much literary skill and graphic power in weaving the intricacies of the problem to be solved."

TRISCHLER & CO., LONDON.

Give me a look, give me a face
That makes simplicity a grace.
Robes loosely flowing, hair as free;
Such sweet neglect more taketh me
Than all th' adulteries of art;
They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

BEN JONSON.

NEW BOOK JUST ISSUED.

THE PRISONER OF CHILOANE.

BY

WALLIS MACKAY.

ONE VOLUME.

With 80 Illustrations by the Author.

The WORLD says :—"A brightly written book."

MORNING POST :—"Bright and attractive."

The SATURDAY REVIEW :—"Mr. Mackay is as good with pencil as with pen."

The SCOTSMAN :—"Written in a bright spirited style and the illustrations are full of fun and movement."

The SPECTATOR :—"Much that is worth reading in Mr. Mackay's book."

Foolscap Quarto, handsomely bound in Cloth, bevelled edges, 7s. 6d.

TRISCHLER & Co., 18, New Bridge Street.

SCARLET FORTUNE:

A Story of the New World and the Old,

BY

HENRY HERMAN,

JOINT AUTHOR OF
"He Fell among Thieves," "The Bishops' Bible," "Wild Darrie," "One Traveller Returns," "Sweetbriar in Town," "The Silver King," "Claudian," "Chatterton," &c., &c.

AUTHOR OF
"For Old Virginia," "A Dead Man's Story," "Between the Whiffs," "A Tragedy of Error," &c., &c.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

London:
TRISCHLER AND COMPANY,
18, New Bridge Street, E.C.

1891.

KEATING'S POWDER.

KILLS
- BUGS.
- FLEAS.
- MOTHS.
- BEETLES.
- MOSQUITOES.

HARMLESS TO ANIMALS.

HARMLESS TO ANIMALS.

KILLS
- BUGS.
- FLEAS.
- MOTHS.
- BEETLES.
- MOSQUITOES.

The **PUBLIC** are **CAUTIONED** that packages of the genuine powder bear the autograph of **THOMAS KEATING**
Sold in Tins, 6d. and 1s. each everywhere.

CONTENTS.

—:o:—

CHAPTER I. - - - - - - - - - - 11

„ II. - - - - - - - - - - 29

„ III. - - - - - - - - - - 47

„ IV. - - - - - - - - - - 55

„ V. - - - - - - - - - - 72

„ VI. - - - - - - - - - - 90

„ VII. - - - - - - - - - - 106

„ VIII. - - - - - - - - - - 121

„ IX. - - - - - - - - - - 130

„ X. - - - - - - - - - 137

„ XI - - - - - - - - - - 148

„ XII. - - - - - - - - - - 160

Ten Pounds In Two Weeks Think of it!!

As a

FLESH PRODUCER

there can be no question but that

SCOTT'S EMULSION

—OF—

Pure Cod Liver Oil

—AND—

Hypophosphites

Of Lime and Soda

is without a rival. Many have gained a pound a day by the use of it. It cures

CONSUMPTION,

SCROFULA, BRONCHITIS, COUGHS AND COLDS, AND ALL FORMS OF WASTING DISEASES. *AS PALATABLE AS MILK.*

Be sure you get the genuine as there are poor imitations.

SCARLET FORTUNE.

CHAPTER I.

It was a pretty face.

It was a pretty, smiling, girlish face.

The big blue eyes laughed at him from underneath the pink-flowered cotton sun bonnet; a smile danced over the dimpled cheeks, and drew apart the kissable lips. A provoking face—he came very nigh saying to himself, a cheeky little face—and yet he was in love with it already.

He was a handsome young fellow, tall and straight. Those shoulders of his would, in time, broaden, and that chest would expand hugely, but, just then, he was as thin as a rat, and as lithe as a panther.

His dark eyes flashed with conscious pleasure, and he twisted and twirled, with a brown hand, a little moustache in which he seemed to take a youthful pride. His face, dark as a berry with healthful exposure to sun, wind, and rain, fairly beamed

at the girl, and he shook the wavy mane which fell over his shoulders, as in playful chiding.

She had folded her rounded arms across her breast, and, in doing so, the sleeves of her cotton gown had turned up just a trifle, and showed the parts which the sun had not touched, pink and rosy. No corset trammelled that supple form ; her limbs had as free play as was accorded to the creatures of earth or heaven.

He, who had been nurtured amid the dreary luxuries and the ghastly refinements of society civilisation, had never thought woman half as lovely as he now adjudged the free-born daughter of the mountains of the West.

"Then, you're not afraid to be here all alone, like that?" he asked.

She looked at him with a mocking, puzzled enquiry.

"Afeard?" she asked. "Afeared o' what?"

"If your father leaves you here alone in this way," the young man continued, "all sorts of things may happen. There are some mighty bad men about this neighbourhood, I can tell you, and they might carry you off and make no bones about it."

He looked, at that moment, as if he would have dearly liked to be one of those bad men, and as if he would have made no bones about it, had he not been heartily afraid of that frail beauty.

She burst into a laugh, like a ripple of silvery chimes.

"Bad men!" she exclaimed, with her arms akimbo, swaying her body by slightly inclining it to the right, and turning up her witching blue eyes at him. "Bad men!" she repeated; "I reckon thar's shucks on 'em, an' no small game neither. Thar's Yutaw Bill. He blowed the top of a man's head off week afore last, at the Creek; an' his pardner, Blotchface Frenchy; he's bin strung up twice, an' Bill cut him down agin each time. Bad men! I reckon they don't make 'em much badder than them two."

"And aren't you afraid of them?" the young man asked, with just a troubled vibration in his voice.

She laughed again, at her brightest.

"Afeared o' them!" she exclaimed. "Why, they're afeared o' me."

If the young lady had read the story of Hercules and Omphale, and had felt herself transported into a mythological age to play the part of the Lydian queen, she could not have more derided the thought of danger coming to her from the wild men whom her fairy beauty enslaved.

"Why, look heear, stranger," she continued, "I can twist 'em round my little finger—jest like that." With that, she twiddled the corner of her apron and tied it into a knot, Then she put a brown finger into

the round hollow, formed underneath the ball of the apron corner, and holding it up, shook it with its projecting little cotton point at the young man. "That's Yutaw Bill," she exclaimed, "an' that's what I'd do with him, if he sarsed me." With that she laughingly snicked the tied apron corner, and sent it flying.

The whole action had been so full of youthful, innocent charm of playful defiance, that the young man was smitten by it.

Who, indeed, in that neighbourhood—savage, ferocious, unscrupulous, and murderous though he were—would have dared to breathe a harsh word to Lucy Maclane, much less to raise a finger against her? A ribald jest, an unkindly word, would have been as a seed of dragons' teeth, from which a horde of pitiless, armed avengers would have sprung, and the injury or insult would not have been more than a day old, ere the offender would have swung from the stout limb of a cottonwood tree, or would have lain by the roadside riddled with bullets. Lucy Maclane was the good fairy of that Rocky Mountain side, as she was its queen.

Men were murdered among the foothills of the Eastern Rockies in those days of the fifties, with a monotonous frequency. They were lawless times, and the pistol, the rifle, and the knife, were the

recognised arbiters of disputes. A man was shot. His corpse would lie, sometimes for days, festering in the sun, before a kindly hand could be found to dig an unceremonious hole, into which the body was flung, with just so much decency as to be, by a stretch of imagery, construed into a semi-civilised burial. But he was killed in what was mostly considered fair fight—and few manners of fighting were considered unfair—and no hand was raised to avenge his death. The pistol cracked, and the knife flashed, and the blood flowed, and stained the sward, and left its dark accusing blotches; but there was no judge. Retribution seldom reached the guilty one. The wrath of the frontiersman was slow and sluggard; it required more than an ordinary murder to rouse it.

But something like a year previously, a drunken half-breed had attempted to kiss Lucy Maclane. The girl had boxed his ears, and being stout of muscle herself, and firmly knit in the limbs, she had sent him staggering into the dust. The drunken man had returned to the assault of defiant maidenly virtue, and had been stretched full length at the girl's feet, senseless and bleeding, by a fierce and swinging blow from the back of a woodman's axe, which Lucy wielded as scientifically as a man. When he had recovered consciousness, he had crawled away, fouling the air with curses and with threats against

Lucy. His words were overheard, and doomed him. The girl pleaded for his life—she tried persuasion, anger, stern command. All were equally unavailing. That half-breed's body swung for weeks from the branch of a red oak, over a chasm many hundreds of feet in depth, while the carrion buzzards tore his clothes into rags, and picked every shred of flesh from the bones. Then it dropped down into the canyon, and its pieces lay by the side of the raging mountain torrent for months afterwards, until a pack of hungry cayutes, venturing thus far mountainwards, one bleak night, made short work of them, and crunched them up. That half-breed's fate proved a savage warning, and men, whose conversation was habitually studded with adjectives and other interpolations of the vilest and filthiest sort, became choice and careful in their language when Lucy Maclane was the topic of camp-fire talk.

She was barely eighteen, that bright-eyed queen of the mountains, and the little vixen knew that she held despotic sway over all the inferior male creation for many miles around. They all petted her, and loaded her with presents; they idolised and spoiled her. Yet she was as good, as simple, as true, as trusty, as homely, and as kindly as any country girl brought up within sound of English cathedral chimes. Many an ailing mountaineer her dainty care nursed

back to health and strength; dying men had crossed the dark threshold with lighter hearts when "fairy Lucy's" soft fingers smoothed their pillows of skins. Men would ride for miles and miles out of their way to be gladdened by one of Lucy's pretty smiles, and no wonder, in that country, where, among a crowd of Sioux squaws, loathly half-breeds, and viler unwomanly white women that were dragged by the proxenete's net from the stews of St. Louis or Memphis into the gambling and dancing hells of the frontier traders' stations, she alone represented the holy attributes of pure womanhood.

The young man returned to the girl the tin cup which he had drained of its refreshing contents of mountain water.

"Thank you, my dear," he said, as his hand grazed her rosy finger tips. The contact made his palms tingle, and his speech became a little bolder. He reined in his prancing horse tightly, and raised himself in his stirrups. "Do you know that you are charming, my dear?" he exclaimed, his eyes glistening and flashing at her.

"You bet I do," was the stolid and long-drawn reply.

It shocked the young man first of all, and then made him laugh outright.

"There's nature here," he said to himself. "Glorious,

unadulterated nature. She is worth fifty Lady Evelynes. How I'd make them all jump if I brought her into the drawing-room at Chauncey Towers."

"Then it's two miles, you say," he continued, "to Dick Ashland's."

"Jest about that," the girl replied; "an' that hoss o' yewrn's got to wriggle a bit less, I reckon, or yew'll git to the canyon bottom instead o' Dick Ashland's. The path ain't much more'n a yard wide at Blacknose Corner, an' yew've jest got to keep his nose straight, or down yew'll go into the alder bushes."

"Thank you for the warning, my dear," the young man retorted. "Old Sam and I have gone up and down many a bad mountain road before to-day, and I think we'll manage to wriggle round Blacknose Corner. Good-bye," he exclaimed, putting spurs to his horse and kissing his hand to her.

Lucy looked after him as he galloped up the mountain path. The sounds of his horse's hoofs, and the clatter of his rifle against his powder flask became less and less audible, but she still saw him turn, and turn again, waving his hat back to her. Then he disappeared among the great pines and the stunted cedars, and Lucy shading her eyes with her hands against the fierce glare of the midday sun scanned the point beyond the small forest where she knew he would emerge. There a little pale streak seamed the

side of the mountain, and opposite the bare and naked edge of the bluish-brown rock the further side of the yawning chasm loomed dark and fierce. Presently a diminutive figure on horseback seemed to crawl out of the deep green of the cedars beyond, and to move like a fly along the precipitous mountain face until it disappeared around the bend.

"He's more hensum than Dave," Lucy said to herself; "an' smarter, an' I guess he looks like good grit."

She rolled up her sleeves and returned to the small round wash-tub that stood on a block of wood by the door of the log cabin. She dipped her hands into the white and opal foam that glistened with prismatic colours in the sunlight, and soon was busy at her homely work.

From where she stood the rough path led down the jagged mountain pass, across the broken and rock-strewn ground, to the vast plains that stretched to the east; brown deserts of sun-dried wilderness where the semi-tropical heat had scorched the sparse grass to cinders, where even the lazy wind stirred up myriads of little clouds of brown sandy dust, appearing from the distance like so many smoking bonfires Looking backwards, looking to the right, looking to the left, the wild stupendous solitude of the Rockies rose in rugged chaotic piles of dead browns and

blues, against which the blotches of vegetation here and there glowed darkly, whilst peak on peak, looming more distantly, became airier and bluer, until, there beyond, the faintest outlines glistened in the summer sunshine.

Far away to the north and far away to the south the great mountain chain stretched out giant arms, nearly half encircling the vast tract of prairie that swelled away from the foot-hills. To the north, one peak lifted its head higher than its peers, like a solemn sentinel guarding the mountain approach. To the south two twin peaks towered, seemingly from the base of the plains, that there stretched arid, sandy, and hungry, with but one tiny thread of water gladdening the eye by its refreshing gleam.

Around the pioneer's hut, however, nature had been liberal of her gifts. The upland was green with pleasant foliage, and the long, soft, thin grass throve even where the foot of man and beast had done its best to crush it out of existence. Wild flowers and luxuriant ferns intermingled in welcome profusion, and behind every rock and every boulder some tiny graceful greenery struggled for life.

It was a truly pleasant spot on that glorious, blazing summer day, but it made one shudder to think what it would be like in winter, when the great pine-clad ridges and the deep gorges would alike become as a

home of the hurricane, where it would roar, and rage, and howl, and shriek, filling the air with a hail of broken branches and frozen snow, driving great drifts of the white icy masses against the hillsides and piling them against the trees; whilst beyond, the great plain would be as one white sheet, appalling with its frigid monotony—whilst scattered rocks, uprooted trees and huge jagged pine-stems would shape themselves into one chaotic, treacherous mass underneath the snowy coverlet; whilst all traces of road or trail would be effaced, and the intrepid frontiersman would be left to fight with the elements in addition to his natural enemies.

George Maclane was well-seasoned in Rocky Mountain experiences. He was one of the first to build a stout and roomy log cabin where previously but trappers' huts and Indian lodges had existed; and more than that, year in year out, summer sun or winter snow, he lived there with his child. Frontiersmen, trappers, and traders asked themselves in wonderment why George Maclane—"Freckled George," they called him—had chosen such a place for his home when all the country between the Sangre de Christo and Pike's Peak stood open to him, and rumour had it that Freckled George was searching the mountains for gold. Men had looked for the precious metal in those rocky fastnesses

before that day, and had come back with heavy hearts and light pouches. When the matter was mentioned to Maclane, he grinned and shook his head, and said "Rot! Cayn't a man abide whar he likes, without a lot o' hulkin' loafin' hoosiers a tryin' their best to stick their fingers in his pie?" As George was known to be not slow with his pistol and his knife, the enquiries invariably stopped at that point.

—Lucy had finished her task, and was engaged in spreading out the flannels and other articles of household wear upon a piece of smooth green sward that seemed strangely out of place amid its wild surroundings. That being done, she emptied the tub and carried it to the small outhouse by the side of the cabin. Then she wiped the log, and, fetching her knitting from within the cabin, sat herself down.

Lucy's little brain was busy. That handsome, bright, dark-eyed stranger had upset its maiden equilibrium. The knitting made but poor progress, and more than once Lucy had to undo what she had completed, and to recommence it. Suddenly she rose and stamped her foot in a petty temper.

"Waal," she exclaimed, in pretty irritation, "it cayn't be that I'm that nuts on him, and ony seen him jest this once, an' know no more about him than about the man in the moon. And don't care

to know," she added, with another stamp of the tiny foot. "Thar!"

A student of female nature would have had his doubts about Miss Lucy's sincerity in her last assertion. Woman is alike all over the world, and the daughter of the Rockies has most of the attributes of her city sister. To desire an object, and to persist in asserting to herself and to others that she does not care for it a bit, is one of the frailer sex's privileges and idiosyncrasies.

Lucy sat on that log, fitfully dashing away now and then at her knitting; at other times staring in front of her, while her work lay untouched in her lap, and the hours passed and the shadows lengthened without Lucy perceiving the change.

The girl was accustomed to be left alone there for days, and nights, too, for that. Bands of Indians could not approach the spot without timely notice reaching her, and against solitary marauders a couple of double-barrelled rifles and half-a-dozen pistols that always hung ready loaded on the cabin wall, afforded her sufficient protection. Not a soul could get near the place without arousing the vigilance and the fierce warning of the watch dogs—huge mongrel English mastiffs—that guarded the cabin, and whose noisy barking re-echoed among the mountains for miles when Lucy took them for a run up the hill-side.

The swift dusk was already set in on the mountains when the girl shook herself together, and, fetching a wooden platter from the store-house, climbed among the wild raspberry bushes that covered the hill side at the back of the cabin, and collected a plentiful supply of the delicious fruit. Then she entered the hut and set the big rough table ready with a joint of roast venison, which she supplemented with corn cake and big-horn fat.

Anon, the distant thump-thump, thump-thump, of horses' feet on rough, rocky ground vibrated on the evening breeze. It drew nearer and came clatter-clatter up the hill. The girl prepared the three great spouting branches of the huge and ponderous Mexican metal lamp with natural wool wicks and rough oil, and placed it in the centre of the big table.

It grows dark very suddenly in those mountain solitudes, where the sun dips down behind the giant crags, lining their edges with purple and gold, and dying away in a lurid glory, which it leaves to mingle on the horizon arch with the softer hues of topaz and sapphire, and to fade away blue and cold in the far East.

It was nearly night when the clatter of the horses' hoofs ceased directly in front of the cabin, and a ringing "Wagh" echoed on the hillside. Lucy replied

with a "Wagh" which had a feminine and cheerful vigour of its own, and a moment afterwards a tall, wiry man pushed aside the bearskin hanging which covered the door, and, with a hearty "Waal, what cheer, Lucy?" caught the young lady round the waist and kissed her on the forehead.

"Thar," he exclaimed, while the girl disengaged herself, "I reckon it ain't every man that's got a daughter like my Lucy to keep house for him while he's a prairie-loafin'. Heyar, Dave!" he shouted, "our meat's cut thick an' no snakes."

George Maclane was a man whom one would have thought a dangerous customer—long, gaunt, and thin, though his shoulders stood out broad and square. He had a pair of piercing, little, greyish-brown eyes, the cold glitter of which contrasted curiously with his joviality at that moment. His lips were thin and nearly bloodless, the square jaws betokened dogged determination. His upper lip was clean shaven, but his long hair and tuft of beard had changed from its former indistinct sandy colour to an equally indistinct mixture of grey and fawn. One freckled cheek was disfigured by a deep scar, where a knife had cut through the flesh and had left a wound which had never quite healed. If a man had read that face for its characteristics, he would have found cruelty and greed written plainly there,

and he would have wondered how such a man came to be the father of so lovely a girl as Lucy. There were stories abroad of George Maclane's beautiful wife, now long since dead, about whom even Lucy had but the faintest recollections, and whose name was never mentioned by, or in the presence of, Freckled George without the mountaineer baring his head. Thus, I once saw a tiger cub lick the face of a dog that had grown up with it. There is no man so vicious that there is not some corner left pure and undefiled in his heart.

The bearskin was raised once again, and a younger man entered. He was nearly as tall as George Maclane, and although his cast of features betrayed a family likeness to the elder man, there was less of the cruelty about his lips, and less of the obstinate squareness about his jaws. He was dark of skin, which matched curiously with the reddish brown of his hair and beard. Dave Maclane was George's nephew and Lucy's cousin, the son of a frontiersman who had paid the penalty of his pioneerdom and fallen under a poisoned Pueblo arrow. People about the mountain stations said that Dave was Lucy's intended husband, and the young man when questioned about the subject, never denied the soft impeachment.

The two men fell upon the food that stood ready

for them with appetites sharpened by a long journey. They had come all the way from Hatcher's Hole, the nearest trading station, a distance of full thirty miles, having gone there to obtain a fresh supply of powder, and other necessities. The girl stood by while they cut great slices from the joint, and spread them upon their corncakes, dipping the two together into the salt, and biting off the pieces without further ado.

The hearty meal was washed down with draughts of the fiery Taos whiskey, tempered, in minute proportion, with mountain water. That over, the two men went outside and sat themselves down on the log-stumps, which stood ready there, to smoke their big sassafras-root pipes. The conversation was made up of the banalities of the time and place, and Lucy, who had resumed her knitting, joined in it but little.

On a sudden, George jumped up and walked along the path that led up hill, with his eyes fixed intently on the moonlit ground in front of him.

"Thar's bin somebody heyar," he said, with quiet intensity. "Who's bin by heyar ? " he asked, turning to Lucy. "Who's gone to Dick Ashland's ? "

"A stranger," the girl replied, casually.

"I guess I know who it is," George continued. "I guessed he was bound for Dick's, when he was that soft and soapy at Hatcher's. I might 'a known he was goin, to Dick Ashland's."

"Waal, an' what o' that?" Lucy asked.

"Yew mind yewr pot, my girl," the elder Maclane retorted, "an' jest look that yewr fat don't burn. That's what ywe've got to do, I reckon. It wur a tall stranger—dark, youngish, wur it not?"

"That's him," Lucy answered.

"I told yew, Dave," the elder man continued, turning to his nephew. "I wur sure of it. I wur that sure of it, that I'd bet a hunderd-dollar bill on it. I tell yew, Dick Ashland's jumped gold. He's got a-head o' me, an' that thar stranger's come to help him git it. Damnation! he shan't git a-head o' me. This is my country. He'd 'a never come heyar, if it hadn't a-bin to follow my clue."

His hand wandered instinctively to the big knife in his belt, and half unsheathed it.

"Dave," he said, with a savage quiet, "come along o' me. I reckon I've got something to say to yew."

The two men strolled away into the night. The girl, still sitting on the log, dropped her knitting on her lap, and listened, with a confused throbbing at her heart, to the sound of the steps as they died away among the cedars beyond.

CHAPTER II.

If there was ever a man, who represented in a worthy and stalwart fashion the bone, the sinew, the pluck, the perseverance, and the indomitable courage of the hardy English yeoman, driven from a Staffordshire home by hard times, and a harder landlord, that man was Dick Ashland. His father, and his grandfather, before him, had farmed some meagre lands at Chauncey Green, in South Staffordshire, and when the old man died, an elder brother claimed possession of the farm. There was an aged mother to support, and Dick Ashland shared that duty with his brother, though he did not share the latter's inheritance. Dick tried a little farming of his own, and was uniformly unlucky. Rent accrued, and for its payment, goods, chattels, implements, and stock were seized and sold, until Dick Ashland, sick at heart, and despairng of success at home, went to seek fortune in a freer and less iron-hearted country. Fortune did not smile very broadly on him, even when he reached the vast prairies. He worked hard, but year after year passed on, and he was not much

the richer. He was hard-witted and shrewd withal, and, in days gone by, had dabbled a little in coal and ironstone mining. When, therefore, he built a hut far up the mountain, and lived there, year in year out, in stubborn loneliness, George Maclane, like others beside him, came to the conclusion that Dick Ashland was like themselves, hunting for that fabulous gold, with which, according to rumour, the region teemed, but which no one yet had been able to find.

He was a burly, broad-shouldered, broad-chested, British bull-dog, was Dick Ashland, who, even in the Rockies, affected the dress, and, as far as he could, the habits of the English farmer. His jovial, round, and florid face, always smoothly shaven, but for a pair of small fair side-whiskers, beamed with honest good-nature, and, as on that evening, he sat with Herbert Chauncey, outside his primitive hut, two finer specimens of the English farmer and the English gentleman could hardly have been found,

Herbert was a younger—the youngest son, in fact, of the Earl of Cleve, and his lordship had been blessed, by his lady, with nine children, which included six then grown-up and marriageable, but unmarried daughters. His lordship was not a hard-hearted father, but six marriageable and unmarried daughters, each of them engaged in frantic efforts

to enter the state of holy matrimony, and each of them failing repeatedly and decisively, are apt to sour the best of tempers among elderly gentlemen, and the result was that Lord Cleve looked with a less lenient eye, than he might otherwise have done, upon the escapades of his youngest son. Herbert had the misfortune of resembling, in a marked degree, his mother, who had been supremely beautiful, whilst his two elder brothers, and all the young ladies, were juvenile reproductions of the face and features of my lord, who was ferociously ugly. A day of reckoning came, and Herbert Chauncey, badgered by creditors whom he could not pay, denied assistance by his father and by his brothers, followed in the wake of Dick Ashland, and packed up his traps to roam and rove abroad, and to lead a wild and hardy life on the western plains, where his genial bonhomie, his manly and distinguished bearing, won him many friends.

While engaged in hunting the buffalo on the Platte River, where at that time they were still to be found in huge herds, a letter of Dick Ashland's reached him, begging him to come to the mountain hut.

"I have something to tell you, Mister Herbert," Dick wrote, "that will be worth while coming to hear. I want your arm and your head both."

Herbert, in the vigour of his youthful impulse,

had saddled his horse and fitted it for the journey ere that letter had been two hours in his pocket. The journey of two hundred miles, between the Platte and the Sangre de Christo Range, lay across barren plains, where, in many parts, both horse and rider wanted for ordinary necessities. But Herbert Chauncey was not easily daunted, and when he dashed across Blacknose Corner that afternoon, his spirits were as buoyant as though he had just completed a ten-mile journey.

Herbert Chauncey's adventures with the fair ones had been at one time the talk of the metropolis. He was a wild harum-scarem fellow, not over careful of his reputation. There had been a sort of half engagement between him and Lady Evelyne Wynter, but the lady's noble parents were told of the young man's follies, and closed their door against him. He was constantly falling in love with every pretty face, and it was no wonder, therefore, when he came across Miss Lucy in all her natural and youthful charm, that his heart went straight out to her and left him a sighing, love-lorn swain.

The two men were speaking in undertones, taking short puffs of their pipes in the meanwhile.

"Theer's enough of it, Mr. Herbert," Dick Ashland said, accentuating each word by a tap on his companion's knee, "to pave the street at the Green.

Theer's tons on it most likely, and no great job to get at it neither. The only wonder is that it hasn't been spotted afore this."

"But with all this untold wealth around us," Herbert interrupted, "why haven't you let me know before?"

"I wanted to make sure on it. I wanted to know exactly what I was about."

"Well, the best thing we can do now, I suppose," said Chauncey, "is to send to Hatcher's, and get some hands to help us?"

The yeoman gave a low whistle.

"No, thank you," he exclaimed. "Not if I know it. I don't want my throat cut, not just yet. My find wouldn't be no good to me if I weer rottin' at the bottom of one of the canyons."

"What do you mean?" the young man asked, eagerly.

Ashland looked warily about the place as if, even in that lonely wilderness, he was afraid of being overheard by a prying ear.

"What do I mean?" he asked, with intense earnestness. "I mean that if as much as a whisper got abroad that I'd made this find—that if a human finger could point out the spot wheer it lies, our lives wouldn't be worth four-and-twenty-hours purchase. We'd have all the scoundrels of the plains down upon us,

and they'd think no more of blowing out our brains from behind, and then killing one another to get hold o' the booty, than of eating their dinners."

Herbert stretched his legs widely.

"That's warm," he said quietly.

"You'd find it warmer than you cared for, Mr. Herbert," Dick continued; "and if we want to save our skins and my gold as well, we've just got to put our heads together, that we have. It's easy that does it this time, and we've got to work slow and sure. Theer's enough theer to set up a dozen on us for life, and we mustn't lose our heads in getting it."

"What do you propose to do?" Chauncey asked.

"Our only chance is to get Government protection, and they wouldn't give us that without an order from Fort Bent. I'm not much afraid of anybody else finding the place. It's taken me just seventeen months, and then I only stumbled across it by a fluke. All the same I don't intend to leave it without one on us keeping an eye on it. What we'll have to do is to pick out enough to show that the stuff is theer all right, and then you or I will have to ride to Fort Bent and get Captain McAfferty to send a squad of soldiers here. All these cut throats will fight shy of Uncle Sam's uniform, though we shall have no little trouble even then."

"Where's the difficulty in all this?" Herbert asked.

"No difficulty," Ashland replied, "if we only keep our heads clear, and our nerves stiff. But theer are over half-a-dozen stations between here and Fort Bent, and if, at any of these, so much as a breath got abroad of what we are about, neither I nor you would live to see the end on it."

He again turned and looked round cautiously.

"I thought I heerd something move among them cedars," he said. "Don't take any notice of it. You may have been followed. I'll go by-and-bye and look from another place. Did you tell anybody at Hatcher's you were coming here?"

"No," the young man replied. "I had no need of that; your description of the road was plain enough; but I remember now, I did ask a girl, about two miles down, how far it was to your place."

"That was foolish," said Ashland. "That girl was Lucy Maclane, Freckled George's daughter, and he's the man of all others that I'm most afraid of. He's always dogging and dodging me about, but I've put him off the scent so far. He's been on the same game as myself these months past, and he's as great a rascal as is to be found on the plains. That killing of Dick Maguire was never properly explained. George insists that it was done in fair fight, but I for one don't believe it. I'm sure theer's someone dodging about among them cedars," Ashland continued.

"Perhaps it's some beast," Herbert suggested.

"Not a bit of it," Dick replied. "Theer's no game theer this time o' the day. You sit here and I'll get round to the back of the cabin and from theer I'll quietly climb on to the rock, and if theer's anything alive among them cedars I'll spot it. Keep your weather eye skinned while I'm away.

With that he rose and sauntered carelessly to the door of the small, rude log hut which formed his habitation. He stolidly walked to the further end of it, and there disappeared.

The young Englishman looked about him in that lovely wilderness, tinged as it was in all the sheen of that midsummer eve. The luxuriant thin mountain grass reached to his knee, here and there a brilliant wild flower looked like a bright spot on the sober green, and further on feathery ferns rose in all their drooping grace. All around the hut the wild geranium, the box elder, the spikenard, and the bearberry throve in wild confusion; whilst hop plants, wild vines, and flowering creepers stretched out verdant tendrils to enlace tree and shrub. The rocks were covered with soft mosses, and hanging grasses, and ferns, whilst a plantation of great cedars and mightier pines stretched as far as the eye could reach to the west, there to be overtopped by the great crags and mountain fastnesses in all their evening glory of purple and gold.

The hut had been built on a ledge of the rock, some two hundred yards square, which jutted out, a smiling headland, over the gaping jaws of a wild canyon. The mountain rose sheer and steep from the chasm, as if heaven's lightning had split the solid rock asunder, and had thus left an all-time token of its fury. The flesh-coloured crystalline feldspar gleamed along the face of the canyon side, but stunted cedars and pines, and insinuating shrubs struggled for life along a hundred little ledges—wherever the fierce wind had deposited a handful of loose earth—and covered with their browns and greens the metallic purplish blue-grey that prevailed more than other tints.

Going down the mountain the headland narrowed, and there again a plantation of cedars—less in extent than the vast forest that stretched westward—met the eye with its sober green, and shut out the road, a mere trail, that led to the plains. North and south the mountains rose gaunt and fierce, and it was only looking eastward that beyond the widening mouth of the canyon, the eye met a hazy expanse on which the experienced frontiersman recognised the familiar features of the prairie.

Herbert Chauncey had long ago got accustomed to the lovely scenery of the Rockies. He had hunted the big-horn, the bear, and the Rocky Mountain deer, over many a hungry range, and had found more

pleasant attraction in the more even-tenored life on the plains. But the thought that the heart of this great mountain was studded with precious metal made him look upon the scene around as upon a fairy world, and his fancy draped every tree with glittering hazy gauzes, held by dancing gnomes and elves. He had been an inveterate theatre-goer in his days of London frolicry, and could not help, being an imaginative man, transporting onto the stage of the Princess's or Drury Lane the picture that unrolled itself before his eyes.

"Begad," he said to himself, "this beats your pantomimes and sensational dramas hollow. And to think that there's gold—bushels of it, tons of it—lying somewhere about. And I'm to have my share of it. Who says there's no such thing as luck in this world. Gold!" he repeated to himself. "Gold! gold! tons of gold!"

He shook himself together on a sudden, and commenced to pace up and down.

"That was a pretty girl," he murmured to himself; "a downright jolly girl. And looked to me, too, as though she were a good girl. The sort of girl that would stick to a man through thick and thin and help him to fight it out, though the devil and his chances were against him. Dick doesn't like her father, but he didn't say a word against the girl.

He'd have mentioned it if there had been anything against her. No, no. She's a little brick, I'm sure. And if I'd dress her in a nice gown and polish her a bit, she'd drive the girls at The Towers mad with envy. A long way between here and Staffordshire, but if there isn't a slip betwixt the cup and the lip I'll take her there, or my name isn't Herbert Chauncey."

He stood tapping the ground with his right foot, puffing away at his pipe, while he kept his hands in the pockets of his buckskin trousers, and, with a vacant gaze, searched the ground in front of him.

A broad hand tapped him on the shoulder. It was Dick.

"I was mistook," said the yeoman, "theer's nobody theer. It must have been some beast after all. But I think we'd better wait until it's quite night for all that, before we climb down and have a look at my find."

The pale, hazy light of the young moon had swathed the mountains, and the hut was lost in the black shade of the giant rock that sheltered it. Among the cedars beyond, the night seemed so dense as to became nearly palpable, whilst just one or two furtive gleams shot through the pitchy gloom where the more open space permitted the light to penetrate.

Ashland and Chauncey were still puffing away at

their pipes, talking of old times at home, of those cheery times in the old country when they both would have thought one half the hardships they now endured a tribulation. Yet they both felt happier in being thus freed from the trammels of nineteenth century civilisation, its shams, and its hypocrisies.

And here they were upon the very brink of untold treasures. They were both to be rich—rich enough to satisfy every craving of the body. It would have been unnatural if, under these circumstances, they had not felt that tremor of excitement which the most cool-headed and least sanguine of men cannot sometimes quite avoid. The younger man especially was eager to feast his eyes upon the spot where the treasure lay.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, Mr. Herbert," Ashland said, at last, when they had locked the rough cabin door, and, with rifles slung across their shoulders, and belts garnished with knife and pistol, were preparing themelves for their mountain journey. "I'll have a look along the trail down hill, first of all. I shouldn't be at all surprised to find Freckled George and that lanky Dave crawling around theer somewheer. You abide here awhile, and keep your weather eye to the top of that rock at the back theer. If you see anything moving theer, man or beast, blaze away at it, and mind you hit it, too. Theer ain't

nobody nor nothin' that's got any business theer this time o' the night, nor that's theer for any good to either of us."

With that he cocked his rifle to the full and strode, with body bent forward and head down, towards the cedars below. His wary figure could be seen moving stealthily across the moonlit open, and then vanished in the black night beyond. The creaking of broken branches, as he now and then unguardedly stepped upon them, marked his progress to Herbert's accustomed ear, but beyond that all was silence—that wavy, breezy, musical silence of a beautiful summer night in a mountain wilderness when the things of the air and the creatures of earth are quiet in sleep, and when only the soft wind makes melody as it plays upon each leaflet.

Herbert stood there, quietly resting his arms upon his rifle, and eagerly scanning the uneven top line of the rock that stood black as a coal against the hazy, transparent, dark blue green of the distant moon-bathed mountains. As he strained his eyes, he thought that some of the unevenness of that rocky line was not stationary. He sank down upon his knee so as to be totally hidden in the dense shadow, and carefully examined the top of the rock. No, he must have been mistaken, he thought. He quickened his hearing, and listened with hushed

heart-beat for any sound that might reach him from the high level. No, there was nothing; he felt sure of that. He rose, rather annoyed, if anything, at having allowed himself to be thus deceived. But even as he looked again, he fancied that the phenomenon of the moving rock was repeated, only to call himself a fool for thinking so the moment afterwards.

He cocked his rifle nevertheless, and remained kneeling there for a minute or two, with his eyes glued upon the rock above. It was only when Ashland's muffled footfall fell on his ear as the pioneer returned, that he rose and went to meet his friend.

"Theer ain't nobody within miles of us," said the yeoman, quietly. "Everything's as quiet as mice. Let's go."

The words were upon Herbert's lips by which to apprise Ashland of his suspicion that somebody or something was alive at the top of that rock at the back, but he was interrupted by Dick's cheery "We can light our pipes now, Mr. Herbert, and do the thing leisurely." He imitated his friend's example by filling his big wild cherry-root bowl, and the moment afterwards the two set out mountainward, much after the manner of a couple of poachers who are going out for a midnight raid in a neighbourhood where the keepers are known to be aged and unwary.

The road was rough, and, less than six hundred yards from the hut, they deserted the narrow path altogether, and struck across broken ground, where the giant pines rose like hundreds of huge masts from the turf and moss-covered earth, with their crowns stretching out like myriads of jagged yard-arms, from which as many tempest-torn, ragged bits of sails were drooping. Between the forest monsters the underbrush—briar, bramble, wild currant, and wild vine—intermingled in snaring confusion, and made progress difficult and now and then painful.

"You mustn't mind this, Mr. Herbert," Dick exclaimed. "It'll save a good mile and a half this way."

The young man laughed.

"I've been through many a thorn-bush before to-day, Dick," he said; "and a little trifle like this does not upset me much."

They were climbing up hill fast then. The vegetation was becoming scarcer and more stunted, the rocks bigger and more smooth-faced. The moon stood at its brightest, and where its silvery light did not penetrate, the shadow was black as ink.

Once or twice they halted and listened, with suspicious ears, for the sound of pursuing footsteps, but, although they both had from time to time imagined that unwarranted noises had reached their ears, on consultation they agreed that they were mistaken.

Once Dick imagined that he saw a shapeless figure, he could not tell whether man or beast, crawling about the rocks and the underbrush some two hundred yards away from them, and he had already lifted his rifle to aim at it. He lowered his weapon, however, saying, "No, I won't make a fool o, myself," and, uncorking his canteen, invited his companion to imitate his example.

"We're not very far now," he said, "and a pull or two won't do us any harm."

Even as he spoke the shapeless something which he thought he had noticed appeared to him again, and without saying a word, he lifted his rifle, and fired. The sharp crack rang through the midnight air and re-echoed among the crags, and, in the stillness which succeeded the report, the two men stood breathless waiting the result. But the black thing had disappeared—vanished again as if by magic. Not a sound, not a sign, ruffled the hush of the night.

"If theer's anybody following us," said Dick, "he'll know that we don't mean to stand any nonsense, and what he'll have to expect if we catch him."

The road lay straight up hill now, along a jagged mountain face where they had to climb now and then like cats. In five minutes or more they had reached the summit, and there they stood upon a smooth and sparsely wooded table-land, about half a mile in

length, and some four or five hundred yards broad. They walked across it with rifles trailed, and came to the edge of the gulch not more than five-and-twenty or thirty feet deep, through which a mountain torrent was rushing in melodious turmoil.

Dick stopped and pointed with outstretched forefinger to the bottom.

"Theer's wheer it lies, thick as peas," he said. "Any amount of it. I'd never dreamt o' coming here, only I shot a buck, and that was the place wheer I had to get him from. Now you know it as well as I do."

After a moment's pause they made their way down. At the bottom, among the young pines,, the moonlight dripped in silvery flecks and blotches on to a moss and fern-strewn rocky ground. The fretting waters had in winter time overrun the whole bed of the gulch and smooth flints, varying from the size of a man's fist to the smallest of pebbles, gleamed and glittered in the pale sheen. Dick took up one unevenly rounded fragment and advanced with it to the water's edge, where the light fell clear and bright on his face.

"Look at this," he said, pointing to a yellowish shining spot on the dull creamy stone; "that's gold. I might 'a taken bushels from here if I hadn't been afraid o' somebody prying about my place and finding it while I was away. You see, while I was alone,

I had nobody to take care of the place, and those fellows are mean enough for anything."

He turned the glittering auriferous stone in his hand over and over again. Both his figure and Herbert Chauncey's were standing out, dark and sharp against the hazy moonlit further side of the ravine.

Crack! Crack! Two shots rang through the air in quick succession, and Dick Ashland, with an unearthly cry, jumped full three feet in the air, and, dropping rifle and flint from his outstretched hands, fell face foremost, with his head towards the stream.

Herbert Chauncey felt a sharp sting below his shoulder, and the rifle dropped from his useless right arm. He looked round in vague amazement, and noticed that the blood trickled over his buckskin hunting shirt. A suffocating faintness came over him, and he sank down on the ground. The noise of footsteps attracted his attention, and as he looked up, he saw at the top, whence he and Dick had come, two men, rifle in hand, who were peering down, shading their eyes with their hands against the moonlight, and evidently preparing to descend.

CHAPTER III.

The two men were George and Dave Maclane. Herbert saw them come down the incline, peering warily, and reloading their rifles as they went. He could hear the dull thuds of the wooden ramrods, and the clicks of the cocks of the weapons as the murderers brushed off the exploded caps. His rifle was lying about three paces from him and he tried to drag himself towards it, but the pain of his shoulder was intense, and he seemed powerless to move so far. With an effort of despair he raised himself on his uninjured arm, and at the same time pulled his doubled-barrelled pistol from his belt. He cocked the weapon and laid it down on the ground by his side, within reach of his hand. In the same manner he drew his knife from its sheath and placed it within easy distance, keeping his eyes upon the Maclanes all the while.

"Cowards!" he muttered between his teeth. "Cut-throats! I wish I had the use of my arm to defend myself."

The two Maclanes had reached the bottom, the

taller, elder man, creeping along with bended knees and stooping shoulders, head foremost, stealthily, like an Arapahoe savage.

Herbert lay without moving, his eyes furiously devouring the two ruffians.

"I reckon I hit him square," George said. "He ain't only jest skeared, that he ain't. He won't want no more gold this side o' Jordan. Let's make no punkins about it. Dead men tell no tales, and we'll jest make cock-sure of it."

Dick Ashland was lying some six or eight paces nearer to them than Chauncey. The two men strode to the fallen yeoman, and George, dropping his rifle, knelt down, and, with both arms, turned the body on its back. The impulse of his movement made it roll a little further down the incline on which it lay, with a nearly grotesque motion, as if at each turn a new swing had been given to it. It rolled until its feet were stopped by a little boulder of rock, and then it lay still, with ghastly eyes turned skyward, and with the hands clenched as if in agony.

Dave had pulled his big butcher's knife from its sheath, and in the greenish white light of the big moon, Herbert could see him drawing it, with a swift downward motion, across Dick Ashland's throat. He could see the hot blood spurting all over the murderer's hands, face, and breast, and hardly

knowing what he did, the nervously twitching fingers of his left hand gripped the pistol, and, lying as he was, he directed his weapon and fired. A yell of pain answered the reverberation of the shot, and George Maclane, who had been standing, an approving witness of his nephew's murderous act, with an avalanche of oaths and curses, drew out his pocket handkerchief, and hastily pushed it underneath his hunting shirt.

"He's shot me!" he cried. "Kill the swine! Kill him!"

The younger man had risen, and crept towards Chauncey, knife in hand.

A second shot startled the midnight silence, and Dave Maclane's glittering weapon flew into a dozen fragments and out of his grasp. One of the pieces, glancing against the young ruffian's wrist, made a deep cut, from which the blood flowed freely. With a savage whoop, more like a beast's than a human being's, the assassin threw himself upon the prostrate man, and wrenched the pistol from his grasp. A blind fury seemed to possess him. He clutched Chauncey by the throat, digging his long irony nails into his flesh, and rained blow after blow of the heavy weapon upon his head. The young Englishman felt crash upon crash against his skull; he felt the grating of the injured bone as the blows rained more

fiercely. The blood started to his eyes, and everything seemed to become black to him. In that awful moment just one flash, one thought of home, crossed his mind, and vanished, as the blows suddenly ceased, and he heard a bright female voice shouting "Stop! stop!" One look, the result of an effort of despair, and he could see Lucy speeding down the gulch-side, beckoning to those below to desist.

Then all became confused. The blood which streamed over his face and forehead blinded him; a choking sensation gripped him by the throat. He could barely hear Lucy's voice still crying "Stop! stop!" Then all was dead and dark.

"What, the damnation, brings you hyar?" yelled George Maclane. "This jest tops it all, I reckon."

Dave Maclane was on his feet again, and still holding the pistol by the barrel. His glances were as furious as those of his uncle, and he gnashed his teeth in a hot rage.

"Yew've killed him! Yew've killed him!" the girl cried, "What has he done to yew?"

"I ain't quite done it yet," replied Dave, grasping the knife which his uncle held out to him; "but I mean to."

Lucy drew herself up to her full height, with her head set back like a defied empress. She stretched out a warning hand.

"Dad!" she exclaimed. "Dave! If you touch him ag'in, I'll tell on yew."

The two men stood aghast, as if struck speechless by that threat.

"Yew'll tell on us?" George Maclane hissed between his teeth. "Yew'll tell on us? Don't yew take no notice of her, Dave," he continued. "Give him one, two, between the ribs—that's what yew've got to do."

"Dad!" Lucy cried, as solemnly as before, "as sure as thar is a God above us, if yew touch him agin, I'll tell on yew."

A furious yell sounded in reply. The guilty father, for a second, stood abashed before his accusing and threatening child.

"What do yew mean?" he shouted, at last.

"I mean what I've said, Dad," Lucy answered quietly, "an' I mean it true. If yew lay another finger on him, I'll tell on yew both. I'll raise the plains agin yew."

George Maclane gnashed his teeth, and his eyes flashed in silent fury. His face, already disfigured by that deep scar, became demoniac.

"Yew'll tell on us?" he hissed. "Yew'll raise the plains agin us? Yew'll tell on yewr father an' yewr cousin?"

His hands twitched convulsively and assumed the

shape of a wild bird's claws. His head shrank down upon his shoulders, and his whole body seemed to quiver with fury. He made a panting step towards his daughter.

"Yew'll raise the plains agin us, would yew? Yew'd have us lynched? Would yew? Yew'd have us hanged. Would yew? Waal, I ain't so dernation sartin ——" His rage stopped his speech; he seemed to foam at the mouth, and stretched out an arm; as if in command to his nephew.

Lucy stood there, solemn and queenlike as before. Her face shone in the moonlight with a white and brilliant glory, and the younger ruffian bowed his head before her glance.

"I'll do all that, dad," she said. "I'll do it all. I ain't afraid o' yew. Yew daren't kill me as yew killed him."

George Maclane raised both his arms above his head and clenched his fists. He drew up his long, gaunt figure until he stood on tiptoe. Then he opened his hands and stretched out his bony fingers. In the meantime, his face was alive with muscular distortions; his teeth were clenched hard, and his thin lips drawn out full. He made several convulsive efforts towards his daughter, his long arms waving wildly, until at last with a cry which seemed to make the night horrible, he rushed upon the girl

and caught her by the shoulder. A slight sound of pain escaped her, as her tender flesh was bruised by the brutal contact, but she stood still, and looked him straight in the face, eye to eye.

The murderer shrank before that brave glance, and his wretched purpose trickled from him and left him a foaming coward, as he met his child's calm gaze. His fingers loosened slowly, and his arm dropped by his side. With heaving breast, and clawing his head with his long nails, he retreated a step or two, and the pent-up savagery in his breast found an outlet in nearly hysterical sobs.

"I reckon yew know what yew're threatenin'," Dave said, quietly.

He was no less infuriated than his uncle, but he knew better how to suppress his rage. "If this man is 'lowed to live, the first thing he'll do on gittin' to the plains will be to denounce us, and I don't see as it's much better to be told on by him than by yew."

Lucy stooped down and knelt by Chauncey's side. Her dainty fingers travelled over his wounded and blood-besmeared face, and gently brushed the gore-clotted hair from his battered forehead.

"It'll be weeks and weeks," she said, "afore he can move. Yew can get sacks of gold from heyar, an' be off away east long afore he can say a word agin yew.

I'll stay behind and see it all out when yew're gone.

She rose and walked to the water's edge, and dipped her handkerchief in the cool rushing stream; then she returned and began to moisten the sufferer's face.

The elder Maclane had stood by grim and voiceless.

"Let her have her way, George," Dave said quietly. "I guess it 'll be best to let her have her way."

The tall frontiersman cast one savage glance at his daughter, then turned on his heel and strode away.

CHAPTER IV.

During the height of the season of the year 1860, London society was moved with pleasurable excitement, by one of those occurrences, which make real life more sensational than fiction.

The aged Earl of Cleve had died in the course of the previous year. His two elder sons had been killed in a terrible railway accident, and the old nobleman, thoroughly prostrated by the shock, was soon laid by their side in the family vault at Chauncey Towers. The earl's youngest son, the Hon. Herbert Chauncey, had succeeded to the titles and estates of his forefathers, but the young man had gone abroad some years previously, and his family had been left without tidings from him for some time. It was only after a prolonged and difficult search, that he was discovered leading a nomadic life on the North-Western prairies. He was recognised beyond possibility of a doubt, but he had, in a murderous conflict of which he had no recollection, received some terrible wounds on the head, and had entirely lost the faculty of memory. The past was a blank to

him. He had no remembrance when he came to the West, where he was wounded, by whom, or under what circumstances. He could not even compel his mind to unburden itself of some of the common-place secrets of his earlier life. He had no remembrance of father, mother, brother, nor of his own boyhood.

With all that, so said report, he was a cheerful, blithe, and pleasant young fellow, extremely intelligent and kindly, and as straight and handsome as an athlete of heroic times.

Eleven o'clock had already struck, one beautiful June morning, and Lady Evelyne Wynter, only daughter of the Marquis and Marchioness of Gwendale, was still tossing sleeplessly on her down pillows. The golden day was peering gaily through a little chink of the drawn curtains, and a bright streak of opal light fell upon the lady's face, as she turned and rolled, throwing off the blue satin, quilted coverlet, which fell upon the Aubusson carpet, and left her in all the white glory of the rich lace that enveloped her rounded limbs. Yawning like meaner mortals, she stretched a pair of creamy, velvety arms, and locked her dainty fingers above her head, adding a second frame to the handsome face, which was already surrounded by her wealth of glossy brown, silken hair. One rosy foot was

peeping shyly from beneath the clinging half-transparent fabric, the big grey-blue, dreamy eyes, were gazing into vacancy, and a sigh, barely audible, but still distinct and unmistakable escaped from my lady's lips.

The fact was, that Lady Evelyne was perplexed. Conflicting currents of thoughts agitated her ordinarily so calm and even mind. They had banished sleep from her couch, and had left her weary, and nearly distressed.

Lady Evelyne Wynter had, for nearly a month already, been engaged to be married to Mr. David Maclane, a young American gentleman of reputed immense wealth. The young man was one of the lions of the season, and Lady Evelyne Wynter, whose twenty-six summers had warned her that it was time to look about for a husband, had taken a rather morbid pride in securing, as her prize, the sensational hero of the year. The daily papers, and the weeklies too, for that, had described the young Westerner with a fervent eulogy and a graphic picturesqueness, which would not have been out of place in telling the story of a god of mythology. He was the hero of a hundred fights, and as many hair-breadth escapes, and, like all heroes, he was as gentle as he was brave and strong. In these very words, that fashionable journal, "Albert Gate," had

described young Maclane, and if the writers on "Albert Gate" were not in a position to know everything about everybody, who was?

On the night previous to the commencement of this second part of our history, Lady Evelyne had been to a ball, given by one of the leaders of fashion. Congratulations had been showered upon her, and she knew that she was the object of such envy and mild hatred as, even in the highest society, is the punishment of success. She had been at her happiest, and at her brightest, when, suddenly, the news was whispered about the room, that the young Earl of Cleve had not only been discovered in America, but that he was actually in England, perhaps even in London.

I will not go so far as to say that Lady Evelyne was a flirt, but there was no doubt that she had allowed a good many suitors to hope, and that she was extremely fond of playing with her numerous admirers. She had flitted from one foamy, airy, infatuation to another with the grace and seriousness of a butterfly, and she had accepted the offer of Mr. David Maclane's hand and fortune, to spite all the other young ladies in town, to start with, and, secondly, because Lady Gwendale, with homely, motherly assiduity, was a very Cassandra in her admonitions, that it was time for her daughter to get married.

I am inclined to doubt that such a thing as a real serious attachment was at all in the nature of Lady Evelyne Wynter. But she had been very fond; in fact, fonder than she herself imagined she could have been, of Herbert Chauncey. He was barely two years her senior, and they had known each other since childhood. As a boy, at Eton, he had spent his pocket-money in buying her bouquets, and she remembered well how proud she was of him, when, as the captain of the eleven of his school, he vanquished Harrow. She had never quite understood why Lord Gwendale had forbidden Herbert his house, and why Lady Gwendale had put a veto upon all intercourse and correspondence with him. She had been told that the young man was unworthy of her, and, puzzled in her girlish mind as to the manner of his unworthiness, she had questioned her French maid on the subject, and had elicited the startling information that Herbert was "too fond of the ladies." How the young man could be too fond of the ladies, and of her especially, and how that fondness could become a crime in the eyes of her parents, she could not guess, and treating the matter, eventually, with that butterfly indifference which characterised her, Herbert and his love were soon forgotten.

Lady Evelyne had returned home from the ball with the broad summer day, and had not been able

to banish Herbert's revived memory from her mind. She babbled about him while her maid undressed her; she found the subject more interesting while the girl brushed her hair; and when the young woman was dismissed, and Lady Evelyne was left by herself to dream of her fancies, Herbert Chauncey's picture would persistently intrude itself upon her not unwilling mental eyes. During the first quarter of an hour, or so, she thought the freshly called-up reminiscences very nice. Herbert had been a sweetheart—one of the many moths that had fluttered round her brilliant light. Now he was back, and she would see him again, and as he was an Earl, and, doubtless, unmarried, they would be able to speak freely together. It was then that Lady Evelyne remembered that she was engaged to Mr. David Maclane, and, for the first time, she considered that engagement rather a bore. It would be very nice to be the wife of a millionaire hero, but—Countess of Cleve—there was a peculiar stirring Anglo-Saxon ring of dignity and inalterable pride about that, by the side of which the parvenu gold was decidedly vulgar and despicable. And, perhaps—who knew—might she not be Countess of Cleve, for the asking—aye, even without the asking?

These self-communings protracted themselves through the early morning hours into the later

morning hours, and gave rise to the unusual fact that eleven o'clock had struck without Lady Evelyne having rung for her cup of tea.

Lady Evelyne was lying drowsily, moving one hand about the streak of golden sunlight that broke into the room, and playing wtih the scintillating atoms that danced in it, when the door of the chamber opened and Lady Gwendale appeared upon the threshold, followed by Evelyne's maid. She was a stately personage, whose iron-grey hair sat well against a kindly face.

"My child! my child!" she exclaimed. "Do you know that it is past eleven o'clock?"

"Well, ma," replied Lady Evelyne, languidly, "what of it?"

"What of it, my dear?" was Lady Gwendale's remonstrance. "What of it? How can you be so forgetful? The duchess's garden-party commences at two, and you have arranged to sit to Delauria at twelve. That portrait of yours will never be finished." "

"I will not go to Delauria's to-day," Lady Evelyne answered pouting ly, "and I'm not so sure that I shall go to the garden-party."

The maid had in the meantime drawn the heavy curtains, and the bright sunlight, softened by the lace hangings within, streamed all over the room.

Lady Evelyne closed her eyes again, whilst her mother held up her hands in amazement.

"Not go to the garden-party!" she exclaimed, with a nonplussed air. "Not go to the garden-party! Why, what has happened? You are not ill, I hope?"

Evelyne held out a pair of pleading arms, and the old lady approached her daughter, who drew her mother's face to her own and kissed it affectionately.

"No, ma dear," she whispered. "I'm not ill, but I do not want to go out. I want to stay at home and think."

Lady Gwendale's temporary anxiety changed to amazement. That her volatile daughter should desire to think, no matter what the subject, was in itself an anomaly, but the tone in which the wish was expressed, the tender pleading of the voice for apparently so trivial a cause, told my lady—a shrewd, experienced woman of the world—that something was not altogether as it should have been with her child. A moment's reflection guided her on the right track for the solution of the problem.

"I know what troubles you, my dear," she said. "At least I think I do. Herbert has returned to England, and you have been thinking of him."

The young lady's eyes brightened; she took her mother's plump hand between her own soft fingers and stroked it caressingly. Her eyelids drooped

dreamily for an instant, then she looked Lady Gwendale straight in the face, and, with a smile dimpling her cheeks, nodded her head twice or thrice.

"I thought so," the old lady exclaimed, with a suppressed sigh. "Really, my dear Evelyne, you must become a little more settled in your intentions and decisions. You are now engaged to Mr. Maclane, and it can make very little difference to you whether young Cleve has returned or not."

Lady Evelyne pursed her lips.

"But, ma," she whimpered, "it does make a difference. Herbert and I were engaged to one another once, and ——" (the young lady raised herself and threw both arms around her mother's neck) "you know he is now the Earl of Cleve."

"Herbert is certainly in a better position now than when he left England," Lady Gwendale admitted, gently disengaging herself from her daughter's embrace, "and I have no doubt that many ladies with marriageable daughters will consider him a desirable possible son-in-law. As to myself, I must decline forming an opinion on the subject till I have seen the young man."

"But you will form an opinion, won't you, ma, when you have seen him?" the young lady suggested, again drooping her eyes and stroking her mother's hand with her own, "and if that opinion is favour-

able——" the little fingers wandered nervously over my lady's open palm, and the grey blue eyes danced with a pretty glitter—"if that opinion is really favourable," Evelyne repeated with a captivating emphasis, and the dainty fingers travelled forwards and backwards, whilst she sought in her mind an expression which did not readily present itself to her tongue, "don't you think Countess of Cleve a prettier name than Lady Evelyne Wynter?"

Lady Gwendale's reply was solemn and ceremonious—

"My child!" she exclaimed, "you can bear no better name than your own."

"I did not mean that, ma," pleaded Lady Evelyne. "I meant that if I married Mr. Maclane I should still be Lady Evelyne Wynter, but if I were married to Herbert I should be the Countess of Cleve."

"You really must not think of such a thing, my dear," Lady Gwendale remonstrated. "You are engaged to Mr. Maclane, and your father and I both consider it a desirable engagement. You are well aware we had sufficient reasons for closing our doors upon young Chauncey, and I have learned nothing which would induce me to alter my opinion or intentions on the subject. Come, now! brush the matter from your mind. Think no more about it."

It proved easier to Lady Gwendale to give that

advice to her daughter than to Lady Evelyne to follow it. All through that morning and afterwards, Herbert Chauncey remained the absorbing object of her thoughts. The bright, handsome, boyish face, the tenderly flashing dark eyes, the youthful form full of stalwart promise, the frank and open, hearty laughter—all these forced themselves upon Lady Evelyne's memory whether she desired it or nay, and compelled her to draw comparisons between her former boyish lover and her present affianced husband, which were not altogether to the latter's favour. There was something about Mr. Maclane which Lady Evelyne had never really liked. He was good-looking enough, as far as a sort of savage comeliness went, and the young lady of fashion thought his quaint Western dialect fresh and amusing, but now and then there came an expression into Mr. Maclane's face which harmonised but indifferently with his usual gentlemanly and kindly demeanour, and which once very nearly frightened his affianced bride.

The result of the young lady's self-communings was that she dawdled about her toilet, that she took an unconscionably long time in dressing, that she hovered over her lunch, and persisted afterwards in continuing an animated discussion with Lord Gwendale, who was pleased to find his daughter

interested in a subject which interested him, and for which she had not shown any previous sympathy.

Lady Evelyne resorted, in fact, to a dozen little schemes, and as many of the recognised privileges of her sex, for the purpose of avoiding the duchess's garden-party, where she knew she would meet Mr. Maclane. Not that she had taken a sudden dislike to the young man, or had resolved upon a breach of their engagement, but her volatile mind had discovered a novel and pleasant attraction, and fluttered around it with that delightful indecision, which is the cream of excitement in the life of a young lady of fashion. It was nearly as enticing as the tasting of some forbidden fruit. Lady Evelyne knew that her duty bound her to Mr. Maclane, and that no image but his should obtrude itself on her waking thoughts. There was something spicily charming about feeling a kind of stolen affection for one man, whilst, in promise, bound to another, which pleased Lady Evelyne, and made her fingers tingle with a nearly voluptuous sensation.

The marchioness was already waiting in the drawing-room, dressed for the garden-party, when her daughter was still in the dining-room, conversing with her father about matters for which, at any other time, she would have evinced not the slightest interest, and the details and particulars of which she

now seemed most anxious to acquire. Lady Gwendale was a patient lady, and well accustomed to her daughter's foibles. When she found that Lady Evelyne had made no preparations whatever for the function of the afternoon, she ordered her carriage and drove away alone.

Evelyne was happy when she found that her strategy was successful. She skipped upstairs to her own room, and threw herself into an armchair, whence she could look out upon the lawn and the green trees beyond, and lose herself in a delightful reverie, whilst her maid brushed and kept on brushing her luxuriant hair. It seemed entrancing to her to abandon herself to this day-dream, and a full hour or more passed before the young lady was aware of the effluxion of time. Even then it was only a message from Lord Gwendale, which brought her to a sense of the everyday common-place. My lord, being for the nonce particularly pleased with his daughter, sent up to know if she would accompany him in a walk through the Park. It had been so long since the marquis had thus honoured her that she accepted the invitation with alacrity, and the balmy summer afternoon saw the pair among the crowd of promenaders by the side of the Row.

Lord Gwendale had never been a very prominent personage, either in politics or the world of fashion,

His inclinations were purely scientific, and his habits modest and retiring; therefore he was not as well known as his rank might have warranted. Yet, many a hat was lifted in respectful ceremony, and many a courteous acknowledgment greeted my lord and his daughter as they passed along.

The shady gravel walk was not as full of its habitual aristocratic throng as it would have been had not the big garden-party, and an equally-attractive fancy fair, claimed the attention of many votaries of fashion. Unlike her father, Lady Evelyne boasted of a large circle of acquaintances, and though she had hoped to find time, during the walk, to indulge in the musings which had proved so pleasant to her earlier in the day, her attention was now fully occupied in saluting and returning salutes. She stopped to exchange a few words with my Lady This, or to ask a question or two of my Lady That, or again to talk banalities with the young Lord So-and-so, while a continuous smile played round her pretty lips. Under the influence of this airy occupation, her previous purpose vanished into thin haze, and was momentarily forgotten, when, on a sudden, at the sight of a young gentleman who was leaning against the railings, Lady Evelyne's face turned pale, and her heart went pit-a-pat in an alarum, which—whether it was painful or pleasant—the young lady knew not.

It was a handsome face, bronzed by the sun, and two or three scars gave it a peculiar charm without disfiguring it. The bright, dark eyes flashed in animated conversation with a gentleman whom Lady Evelyne did not know, whilst the brown, nervous hand twirled a small, dark moustache, with unconscious dandyism.

Lady Evelyne looked the gentleman straight in the face, but he gave no signs of recognition, and continued an apparently agreeable converse. The young lady's fingers tightened, and her breath became tardy. She nervously gripped her father's arm.

"Look there," she whispered. "Surely that is Herbert Chauncey?"

My lord put up his double eye-glasses, and stared at Herbert, who avoided the old nobleman's glance with well bred ease. Lord Gwendale did not know what to make of it, for surely that was the young Earl of Cleve. It was true my lord had forbidden the young man his house, but why this absolute want of recognition?

"Really, my dear," stammered the Marquis, "I—I—I do not know what to make of it. This is Herbert Chauncey. I am sure it is Herbert Chauncey. He seems purposely to avoid us; let us walk on."

Lady Evelyne, however, was not to be thus easily frustrated. She walked right up to the young

gentleman, and, with her face beaming with her sweetest smile, she said:—

"Surely I cannot be mistaken. You are Lord Cleve?"

"That is my name," the gentleman replied, affably, but his manner showed that he believed he was speaking to a total stranger.

"But don't you know me?" Lady Evelyne continued, in amazement.

"I have not that pleasure." Lord Cleve replied, as pleasantly as before.

Evelyne felt a ball rising to her throat.

"You don't know me!" she exclaimed in half-suffocating wonder. "You don't know Evelyne Wynter?"

"I am very sorry," the earl answered, in an even-tempered common-place manner, "but I do not."

Lady Evelyne stepped back and bowed stiffly. She looked her former lover up and down, with a withering glance which seemed to produce no impression but a faint and curious astonishment.

"Thank you, my lord," she exclaimed, and rejoined her father.

Yet, she could not help turning her head.

Lord Cleve's face had assumed an expression of puzzled anxiety, and Evelyne's quickened ear caught

the words—barely whispered, as they were, to the young man's companion—

"Evelyne Wynter? Evelyne Wynter? Ought I to know her? Do I know her?"

"Let us go home, pa, dear," she breathed, when she was again leaning on Lord Gwendale's arm. "Let us go home. I do want to cry."

CHAPTER V.

When Lady Evelyne walked away, a flashing picture of proud annoyance, Lord Cleve followed her disappearing figure with hungry eyes. He had long ago grown accustomed to the failing which marked his everyday intercourse.

"I suppose I knew her once," he said to himself, with a sigh. "God! how hard it is not to be able to remember."

His companion, a member of the firm of solicitors who had served the house of Chauncey for generations, had purposely avoided interrupting the little scene which took place before his eyes. Solicitors are proverbially cautious, and Mr. Archibald Quenthelm was polished cautiousness personified. He was fully aware that Herbert Chauncey had been shown the door by Lord Gwendale, and he did not, at that moment, care to solve the question whether or not Lord Cleve's present conduct was an intentional quid pro quo for the marquis's abrupt termination of the former engagement, or whether it was simply the outcome of the young man's affliction. But when

Herbert turned to him, with a pallid sadness in his face, and asked him, "Can you tell me, Mr. Quenthelm, if I ought to know this young lady?" he felt himself absolved from the consequences of an abrupt explanation, and replied:

"Certainly, my lord. You were once engaged to be married to her."

"You amaze me," Herbert answered. "I have no memory of the thing at all. Most likely I cared very much for her, and perhaps she cared for me—perhaps she cares for me still. She must have thought me very rude. What did she say her name was—Evelyne Wynter? I wonder what Lucy would say if I were to broach the idea of marrying?"

A wistful little laugh tripped in the wake of the words.

"Let us follow them, Mr. Quenthelm," Lord Cleve suggested to the solicitor. and the two pushed their way through the little knots of pedestrians towards the point where Lady Evelyne and her father had disappeared from view.

"Do you know, that was a pretty girl," Lord Cleve continued, "and I admire my own taste in having once thought well of her. Not as pretty as Lucy, though. I have never seen any woman half as pretty as Lucy." He stopped for a moment and looked into his companion's eyes. "Nor a millionth

part as good," he added, with serious emphasis. "I'm sure I do not know one-eighth of what she has done for me—and never shall know, I suppose—but thus far my first memory carries me, that when I recovered from my wounds, her face beamed upon me like an angel's, and she has been my untiring good angel ever since."

The search proved fruitless. The marquis and his daughter had left the Park by Apsley Gate, where the great Piccadilly season traffic gaped to engulf them.

While Herbert and the solicitor were standing by the edge of the side-walk, consulting with one another whither to turn their steps, a peculiar incident attracted their attention.

Two gentlemen were endeavouring to shoulder their way through the crowd, so as to be able to reach Rotten Row, and in their efforts they found themselves face to face with Lord Cleve. One was an elderly man, tall and squarely-built, with long, sparse, grey hair, and a face cleanly shaven but for a small grey tuft at the chin. His was not an agreeable face, but scarred and freckled. A cruel face, with thin, whitish lips and ugly square jaws, and with shifty, small, cold, greyish-brown eyes. The second man was much younger and not so tall as the other. His reddish-brown hair was cut short, and

his beard, of a similar colour, was cropped close. He resembled the elder man, so that he might have been taken for his son, but his features were of a more pleasant type. Both were of unmistakable American extraction, though dressed according to the latest London fashion. The younger man's gaze was the first to meet Lord Cleve's, and he turned a greenish pale under the bronze of his skin. He staggered back a pace, and excitedly gripped the elder man's arm. The latter, thus directed, also looked full at Herbert, and his face became an ashen white, while his teeth seemed to rattle.

Lord Cleve stared at the two men with ill-suppressed and amused interest. At that moment the crowd swayed a little on one side, and the young nobleman was by it borne away from the two Americans.

"Did you notice those two men?" he asked his companion, when they were strolling along the less-crowded footwalk of Piccadilly. "Something shocked them, for they were both as pale as sheets."

"The younger of the two," replied the lawyer, "is Mr. David Maclane, a very rich American who, strange to say, is engaged to be married to Lady Evelyne Wynter. The elderly gentleman is his uncle."

"Maclane?" was Lord Cleve's startled exclamation. "That is Lucy's name. Lucy's name is Lucy Maclane.

These men seemed to know me, and to be shocked and surprised to meet me. I must ask Lucy about this. You must excuse my excitement, Mr. Quenthelm," he added, with a frank smile. "That poor broken head of mine can bear so little, and at nearly every step in this Old World hive I come across something that surprises me—something I ought to have remembered, and which has gone from my memory. That gentleman, you say, is engaged to marry Lady Wynter. To tell you the truth, Mr. Quenthelm, I prefer the lady's appearance to that of her intended husband."

"You most probably met Mr. David Maclane and his uncle out on the Western prairies," the lawyer suggested. "Their wealth consists of vast gold and other mineral deposits in the Rocky Mountains, and I have been credibly informed that up to some few years ago they were far from rich."

"I never came across them that I know of," Lord Cleve replied, "and I don't remember ever having been in the Rockies. Mine was a prairie life; at any rate, as far back as I can recollect. Gold was found, I know, in large quantities, a few years back, about Pike's Peak and elsewhere, but it never troubled me. The hunt for gold had no enticement whatever for me. You see I have not been over-strong, and the excitement would have been more than I could well have

borne. You smile," he added. "I look a sort of juvenile athlete, do I not? I am sound enough in wind and limb, but I can't bear much here." With that he touched his forehead, and a sad smile spread over his handsome face.

"Miss Lucy Maclane is staying with you, my lord?" Mr. Quenthelm asked.

Herbert's face brightened, and the smile became a contented one.

"Lucy never leaves me," he said. "She is too fond of me."

"You lived all these years on the prairies together?" was the further enquiry.

"Quite so," Lord Cleve answered, and, noticing an expression of cynical incredulity and satirical bonhomie on his companion's face, he shook his head, and added: "We lived together as a brother and sister might, neither more nor less. Ah! you find it hard to believe this, but it is so. I would have married Lucy a hundred times if she had consented, but now I would no more dare to ask her than I would a seraph or a fairy."

They loitered along until they reached Claridge's hotel. There Lord Cleve took leave of Mr. Quenthelm. There was, of course, the Earl's town house, in Berkeley Square, where Herbert might have stopped, but the place had been shut up since the death of its

previous owner, and the Hon. Miss Chauncey, Herbert's eldest sister, who had looked upon herself as the head of the family, did not think the place fit to receive its present owner, without some tidying and brushing up. The young man had, therefore, taken up his temporary quarters at Claridge's, glad by this means to escape the host of inquisitive callers, who kept the knocker and bell at Berkeley Square in continual movement.

Lucy was sitting at the window of the private sitting-room which Lord Cleve had engaged for her separate use, when Herbert entered. Her budding, girlish beauty had expanded and blossomed into a womanly loveliness which could not fail to be remarkable. Charming, truthful nature was writ all over that beauteous face—God's fairest image as He had created it. The deep blue eyes were eloquent with tenderness and truth; the downy dimpled cheeks redolent with graceful delicacy. There was just a little pensive sadness hovering over it all, but faintly perceptible at intervals when the big eyes were not attracted by another gaze, and which seemed to come as if in spite of itself. The lithe and round figure was draped in the simplest of gowns—homely, greyish, woollen stuff, summer though it was, and the young lady had the courage to despise the absurd edict of fashion, which in those days

imposed upon the fair sex the ordeal of wearing crinolines.

As Lord Cleve had told Mr. Quenthelm, Lucy had lived with the young man whose life she had saved on the prairies all these years, and the earl had spoken the absolute truth when he had said that they had lived together as brother and sister.

Her father and cousin had rendered her no further assistance than carrying the wounded man to a temporary place of shelter, in a tumbledown and disused trapper's hut, on the further side of an incline on the opposite side of the gulch, and on a spur of the mountains totally distinct from that on which both Maclane's and Ashland's cabins were situated. By these means, and by Lucy's silence, they were sure of obtaining at least sufficient breathing time to secure a large amount of gold, and to be able to fly east before the avenging arm of the rough border law could reach them. Not very far from the broken-down trapper's hut lived, in solitary retirement, an old Sioux half-breed, named Makasapa, who, like everybody else in that country, would have died to help Lucy. The old man spoke barely any English at all, although his father had been a rough and ready Scotch trapper, who, somehow or other, years and years before, had spent a few hunting seasons among the Dacotahs, and had disappeared with-

out the least further enquiry about the fate of his wife and child. But Lucy was fully conversant with most of the Indian dialects of the surrounding tribes, and had no difficulty in obtaining the old half-breed's skilled assistance in the dressing of Herbert's wounds, and also in securing his secrecy on the subject.

Weeks passed thus, and the girl barely left her charge for a moment. When the wounds began to heal, and the flickering life became stronger—when consciousness returned and the danger of accusation grew more threatening, the Maclanes paid hurried visits to the hut, with ghastly pale faces enquiring about the patient's condition, and with hard-set teeth vowing that they would finish their job if the wounded man's absolute silence could not be obtained. They had struck a great lode of gold in the meanwhile, and had stored away a big pile of the precious metal ready for sudden flight. Again and again Lucy stood determinedly in front of the man who already owed her his life; over and over again she dared and defied her savage relatives. She went even so far as to order them out of the hut at the pistol's mouth. Little by little, the Maclanes came to accept the danger of the situation, and to prepare for all eventualities.

They had buried Dick Ashland in an out-of-the-

way spot, where nobody would have thought to look for him. They had removed all traces of bloodshed from the gulch bottom, and burned their own gore-stained clothes. Thus they entertained the hope, by desperate impudence, to be able to brazen the matter out, until they could retire and disappear in the great thriving east.

Great was their amazement, and equally great their relief, when Herbert, on recovering, recognised neither of them, nor Lucy; when he seemed to wake, as from a dream, in which all the reminiscences of the bloody fray were swallowed up; when, in fact, all memory of that terrible night and of all persons and places, seemed to be gone from the young man's mind. They looked at one another in grim and half-frightened stare, as if the relief which had burst upon them was too sure to be real. But the hours and the days drew on, and Herbert's condition remained the same. In fact, at that time, loss of memory was absolute; acts of the morning were obliterated by the events of the afternoon, and the poor young fellow could not carry his recollection from one day to the next. This surprising dispersal of their fears changed the plans of the Maclanes, and they urged Lucy to return to the parental cabin, and to share the immense and newly-found wealth. But the girl was firm. She would not again

live with her guilty father and cousin. She would rather die a hundred times, than touch a red speck of their blood-stained gold. She would leave her relatives to explain the circumstances as best they might, but she would move far away from them and devote her life to the care and recovery of the man whom they had so dastardly assailed and injured. She gathered up her belongings, and those bequeathed to her by her dead mother, and having persuaded Makasapa to join his fortunes to hers, the two set out with their now fairly recovering patient, to the prairies north of the South Platte, where Makasapa soon found them a home with some friendly Sioux.

As Herbert became stronger, his memory of actual occurrences improved, and he was able to remember events of the days and weeks as they swept by, but the past, even as near as his residence and recovery in the mountains, was gone. To all his questions concerning himself, both Lucy and Makasapa gave evasive answers, and, as the enquiries fatigued him and seemed to distress the girl, he did not continue them. As his health and strength returned, it brought back his impulsive, hot-hearted disposition, and, as was only natural under the circumstances, he fell head over ears in love with the beautiful girl who was so good to him. But Lucy knew how

to tame her admirer into tacit submission, and Herbert at last resigned himself into living with her as a brother would with a dearly beloved sister.

The reader may well ask why Lucy refused to marry the man for whom she had sacrificed so much, and who would have burned his right hand to possess her in holy wedlock. The modern cynic philosopher may smile, and the would-be-clever exponents of the dogma that life is composed of meannesses only, may deride. I do not feel myself called upon to convince the one, or to argue with the other, but the fact remains that Lucy took upon her shoulders the load of her father's crime, and that she vowed to expiate it at the price of a life-long torture, if need be. She loved Herbert Chauncey; she had loved him from the moment she first set eyes upon him, and her devotion had increased with every day she had passed in nursing him. She loved him with the purest devotion a woman's heart is capable of, and just because her love was so pure, she, the daughter of an assassin, resolutely refused inseparably to link her name with that of an honest man. She would be his loving friend, his tender sister, his dog if need be; but she would not have her husband awake one day to the fact that the wife whom he nurtured was the daughter of the man who had murdered his friend, and who had attempted to murder him.

During all this while Lucy held no communication whatever with her father and cousin, and the latter, whether it were from indifference or fear, sought none with her. Therefore, when the Maclanes met Lord Cleve in Hyde Park they were thunderstruck to find themselves face to face with their former victim, and they were absolutely unaware that Lucy was in London also.

When the cute New York enquiry-agent finally tracked Herbert to his moving prairie home, and established his identity beyond chance of contradiction, the young man was sorely nonplussed about his future action as the bearer of a great and ancient title. He felt no desire to live in a city, and in addition to that, Lucy at first declined to accompany him to England. Lord Cleve had to exercise all his powers of persuasion to induce her to quit the New World for the Old. Even then she would accept but trifling sums for the purchase of such indispensables in the shape of gowns and bonnets as the difference between prairie and town life necessitated. She would have none of the "forfarows," as she termed them, which the oily persuasion of the clerk in the big Chicago dry goods store attempted to press upon her, but chose the simplest and homeliest of materials. The Yankee crinoline, with its elaborate arrangement of a hundred silk-covered, pliable

springs, set her in an absolute roar, and made her exclaim, "I reckon I ain't a dancin' bar. When I am, I'll buy myself a cage—not afore."

Thus it came that, on that early summer evening, when she rose to meet Lord Cleve, she was dressed in more simple fashion than any of the maids who waited upon her, and yet in a manner which none the less set off her dazzling beauty.

"Yew should have been sittin' at this winder, Herbert," she exclaimed, holding out her brown tiny hand to the young nobleman. "I guess it's punkins, it is. It's as funny as hearin' a Dutch Jew pedlar playin' on a fiddle. If all them wimen that live in this town don't make shows o' themselves to make an Ogalala squint, I don't know a corn-shuck from a sweet potato. They squeeze themselves in heear"—here the young lady danced into the centre of the room and gripped as much of her slender waist as her two hands could enfold—"and they stretch themselves out heear"—here she stooped and gracefully lifted the hem of her skirt—"an' Herbert, yew should jest hear 'em talk. I heerd tew of 'em on the steears to-day. I came nigh on thinkin' that they had their mouths full o' mashed turnips. It wur all 'Aws' and 'Ows.' I guess I wouldn't shine amongst that lot, not as much as a rushlight."

With that she turned up her lovely eyes and looked

into Lord Cleve's face with such a captivating smile, that the young man held out to her both hands in which she placed her own.

"You are not a bit like the London girls," he said, "and I wouldn't have you change for the world. You couldn't be better than as you are—not to my liking—if you tried ever so."

Her face dimpled sweetly and her eyes glistened as they frankly met his gaze.

"I guess," she said, "that's jest because yew're used to me, an' because thar ain't been time yet fur any o' the London girls to hop around yew. But it'll come, as sure as raspberries don't grow on pine trees."

"What will come," he asked, playfully.

She walked away from him and commenced drumming on the window panes, looking at the crowd below,

"The young woman will come," she said, "that'll want to marry yew. That's sartin sure."

Having delivered herself of that startling phrase, she commenced to whistle "Yankee Doodle" with a verve and vigour which to an English ear would have sounded an amazing anomaly.

The Earl stood for a moment or two in the centre of the room, and undecidedly followed Miss Lucy's movements. Then he stepped to the window, and bending his face in an unsuccessful attempt to gaze into her eyes, he asked:

"What has put that idea into your head?"

She slipped away from him and seated herself in the big velvet-covered arm-chair which stood near.

"Nothin'," she exclaimed. "I guess it's nothin'."

Her mite of a foot was beating a march on the carpet, and her eyes were drooped as if she were searching for some object hidden there, when his encounter with the Maclanes, that afternoon, crossed Lord Cleve's mind. His misfortune had caused him to acquire a habit of dashing from one subject to another, as he always dreaded to forget what he did not elucidate when the occasion presented itself.

"By the way, Lucy," he asked, "have you any relatives of the name of Maclane?"

There was such a frightened-fawn look in those big blue eyes, and a startled expression crept over the beautiful face.

"I've got a father, an' a cousin," she replied. "Why do yew ask?"

"Is your cousin's name David Maclane?" Herbert continued in his enquiry.

The trifling shadow deepened on the girl's features.

"I guess that's it," she replied. "Why do yew ask?"

"And is your father a tall gentleman," he persisted, "with a big scar on his face?"

"That's him, most likely," she answered, rising. "But why do yew ask?"

"Two gentlemen ran across me in the Park," he replied, "and I was told they were Mr. David Maclane and his uncle. They are very rich, I am informed, and young Mr. Maclane is engaged to be married to Lady Evelyne Wynter."

She had listened in a pale silence. Then she shook herself together, and, with a barely audible laugh, she said in a tone of perfect commonplace—

"Dad and Dave in London! I never reckoned on that."

Her self-possession had returned, and "Yankee Doodle" was again on her lips, but with only a half-hearted rhythm.

"Do you know," continued Lord Cleve, "that I fancy your father and your cousin must have met me before—under disagreeable circumstances, I should say—for when they saw me they turned as white as ghosts. You're not ill, my dear?" he added, seeing the colour fade from her cheeks.

The frightened-fawn look was again in those big eyes, more tremulous than before, but it was gone in a flash, and she burst into a peal of silvery laughter.

"Of course I ain't sick," she replied, "but it's that stifling in this place that a Greaser couldn't stand it. I want a whiff of fresh air."

Herbert rushed to the window and opened it wide.

"What does it all mean?" he said to himself. "What does it mean?"

CHAPTER VI.

Miss Lucy, simple daughter of nature, nursed in all the savage frankness of the Wild West, and taught from early infancy to call a spade a spade, was yet a woman, and, being a natural woman, a true woman. Now, it is one of woman's most highly-prized attributes—be the fair one a Parisian mondaine, an English aristocrat, or a Turkish odalisque—to obtain from simple man what she desires, and to give just as much as she wishes, and no more, in return. Miss Lucy had a shrewd little head on her shoulders. We have already seen that she was endowed with a strength of will and purpose of a most unusual kind, and by adding together these qualities in a sort of psychological arithmetic, the sum obtained would form a remarkable example of female supremacy over the helpless animal, man.

Miss Lucy set her little wits to work, the moment she had recovered her wonted self-possession, to extract by a process of insinuatory wheedling, and a pleasingly deceptive pressure of enquiry, from Lord Cleve all he had learned about her cousin, her father,

and Lady Evelyne. She had no trouble in eliciting from the young man that he had once been engaged to Lady Evelyne Wynter, and thereby started Herbert upon the idea that he must needs, in his usual slap-dash manner, write a letter of apology to the lady who had, once upon a time, consented to be his wife. The thought was no sooner born than it was acted upon, and young Cleve sat down at the old-fashioned mahogany bureau to pen his apology, while Lucy stood behind his chair looking over him.

"The Earl of Cleve presents his compliments to Lady Evelyne Wynter," he wrote, "and desires to explain a circumstance which, he is afraid, must have surprised Lady Evelyne. Lord Cleve is afflicted with loss of memory, the result of some wounds in the head. It was, therefore, his misfortune, and not his fault, if he did not recognise Lady Evelyne Wynter this afternoon. He hopes that this apology will be his excuse, and that Lady Evelyne Wynter will believe that Lord Cleve could not possibly have acted towards her in any spirit of discourtesy."

"It's jest a bit soapy, ain't it?" Miss Lucy exclaimed, when the young gentleman had dotted all his "i's" and crossed all his "t's," "an' it's a little smeary, like maple sugar, when yew get too much of it on yewr spoon. I guess she's a hensum young woman. Waal, it ain't no matter." With that she

danced away, apparently unburdened by thoughtfulness or care.

That was all outward show, however; all nervous determination not to show to the man she loved how much she loved him. If it had been possible for a prying eye to penetrate into Lucy's chamber that night, it would have found her walking up and down the softly-carpeted floor like a caged panther. Her bosom heaved, she wrung her tiny hands with a nervous grip, and big tears were flowing down her cheeks. At last she flung herself on her knees by the bedside, and buried her head on the coverlet, whilst the soft masses of her hair fell like a glossy shower around her. She sobbed, sobbed, and sobbed, as if her heart would break.

On a sudden, she jumped up in a silent fury, both against herself and the fortune which oppressed her. She gnashed her white teeth, and tore at her hair.

"God!" she cried, "don't try me too severely. I'm only a woman after all, and it'll soon be more than I can bear. What have I done, how have I sinned, to deserve it all?"

The paroxysm of her grief prostrated her, and she gradually sank on her knees, and thence on the floor, where her lissome figure lay extended, white and cold as the garments which sparsely covered her, while her babbling lips murmured: "What have I

done? What have I done? What have I done? What have I done?"

Even the squalid ugliness of London architecture could not rob the summer morning of its early roseate beauty, and Lucy could see the first softly blushing light of day, creeping from across the housetops, through the aperture between her curtains ere she recovered her wonted composure. She went into her dressing-room and sponged herself with cold water. The touch of the refreshing element seemed to bring back vigour of mind and elasticity of body, and the previously-mentioned prying intruder, had he seen Miss Lucy only at that moment, would have deemed her the most hardened of cynics.

"Waal, it's jest another slice o' my luck, I s'pose," she said, as she splashed and flung the water about her in all directions; "an' what cayn't be cured 's got to be endured. I've gone that fur, an' I'll jest see it out, I reckon."

Five minutes afterwards, her head resting on her sun-bronzed arm, and her bosom moving in as tranquil sleep as a child might enjoy, Lucy's mind was at rest.

The next morning brought Lady Evelyne's reply to Lord Cleve. Lady Evelyne told the young man that she had felt sure that a sufficient explanation would be forthcoming, and that she had since learned from

other lips, as well as from Lord Cleve's letter, that he was not to blame. The writer ended with a statement that, most likely, she would meet Lord Cleve, and would then be able personally to assure him that the matter had passed from her mind.

"That's a downy young woman," Lucy exclaimed when she had read the letter which Lord Cleve had tossed to her across the breakfast table. "She knows a caterpillar from a skylark. A Yankee couldn't get over her with the brass-earring dodge, I don't reckon. But I guess she's nice, none the less, else yew'd never bin fond of her."

Lord Cleve smiled; he was rather pleased to see a little nascent jealousy clouding Lucy's face. It looked to him like an awakening of that electric womanhood which flashes and sparkles by the contact of responsive love, as distinguished from that merely holy feeling which joins mother and child, brother and sister, in mutual affection. In love affairs Herbert had always been a frail and flighty young man. He had flitted from one amour to another with the lightheartedness—not of the man about town, for he was not heartless—but of a reckless young roysterer who lives for to-day, and thinks not of the morrow. His love for Lucy had been his first serious passion, and although dashed and violently smothered, the embers still glowed beneath the ashes, and had Lucy

permitted it, he might have loved her as much as ever. He had long ago, however, given up all idea of a union with the girl who had so befriended him, and it was therefore but natural that, when the memory of a previous love affair was forced upon his mind, he should welcome it, not only by reason of its inherent piquancy, but because he conceived it a sly dig at Lucy, who had so persistently refused him the boon he craved for.

Lord Cleve's arrival was no sooner heralded about town than he was inundated by a perfect shower of congratulations and invitations. Had the young man believed about one tithe of what was written to him, he might have wondered why the bells of Bow Church were not rung as a token of the universal joy at his return. He might indeed have been persuaded that his personality was not only of importance to society, but to the commonwealth at large; and that the House of Peers was safe from all assault and disparagement now that he had returned to shed an added lustre upon that already illustrious chamber. But the young Earl had been accustomed to hear oily flattery of the kind that was poured on him termed, in western phraseology, "chin music" and "lip wash," and to despise it accordingly. The notes and missives, coroneted and perfumed though most of them were, went—the major part at any rate— into the waste-

paper basket. Herbert had neither the patience nor the inclination to answer them himself, and the idea of employing a secretary never struck him. He found it sufficiently hard work to write to his six sisters who were living in disconsolate and grumbling retirement at Chauncey Towers, and to the numerous circle that claimed family relationship with him.

The first few days of Lord Cleve's sojourn in London passed swiftly amid the stress of the ordinary occupations of a gentleman of fortune who has just entered into possession of his property. Solicitors had to be consulted; interviews had to be granted to bailiffs, stewards, and tenants; tradesmen's bills, left unpaid by the previous bearer of the title, had to be checked and settled; and amid the hurry and scurry of all this matter-of-fact occupation, Lord Cleve found but little time to abandon himself to the round of gaieties temptingly baited for him by Belgravian society, much less to follow the regular giddy whirl of fashion's daily rites. He would breakfast with Lucy, and then pass hours upon hours with those who had business with him, and a hasty luncheon would be succeeded by further work. He could barely snatch so much of the daily sunshine as to take Lucy for an afternoon ride in the Row. The fashionable equestrian promenade had seen few such horsewomen as that daughter of the Rockies. She sat on her

horse as if she had been born on it, and once when her mount, frightened beyond measure by such a trifle as a flaring silk parasol poked into its face by a silly woman, plunged and reared, and wheeled as if it would never recover its equanimity, Lucy seemed so little ruffled by its capers that the by-standers raised a ringing cheer. People began to wonder, and society began to enquire, who was the lovely girl in that quaint no-fashion habit who so often accompanied Lord Cleve. Society, according to its habit in similar cases, speedily solved the question, and shocked itself beyond measure by the assertion that Lucy was Lord Cleve's mistress. What else could she be? asked society. She was not Lord Cleve's wife, that society knew, neither was she his sister or relative; therefore, society, without further ado, wrote down Lucy a wanton, and considered Lord Cleve's conduct positively shocking. Society, its outraged notions of propriety notwithstanding, looked upon Lord Cleve as a much injured and interesting young man, and found excuse for his life—à la grand Turk—in the circumstance that he had passed so many years among the savages. "He'll make as good a husband as most young men," the Duchess said to the Marchioness. "If I were Evelyne I should prefer him to that young man of whom we know so very little." And the Marchioness confessed that her views coincided with those of

Her Grace. A mistress was a shocking thing, but young Cleve would soon become civilised under the influence of a handsome and polished leader of fashion.

I will not go so far as to say that either Lady Evelyne or Lady Gwendale went purposely out of their way to throw themselves across the young man's path, but they came as near that course of action as an impartial judge would allow without actual admission of the truth of the charge. They missed no entertainment, ball, or function of any kind where they could imagine or hope to meet Lord Cleve. But as Lord Cleve, for a good many days and nights, went to none of these, their love's labour was lost.

In the meantime, Lord Cleve had endeavoured to learn from Lucy why she had held no communication, and wished to hold no communication, with her father and cousin. Her reply was simple enough. She said that she hated her cousin, that she had had a deadly quarrel with her father, and had vowed never to live with them again. In answer to more pressing enquiries, she turned up her big blue eyes at him and looked into his with such a tender pleading, that he had not the courage to persist.

"Don't ask more," she begged, and he who was so deeply indebted to her was happy to look

into the face that bore such a heavenly stamp of truth, and, by one deep gaze, to silence the promptings of curiosity.

On the other hand, the Maclanes, George and David, seemed to take no trouble to reopen intercourse with Lucy. When the girl had first disappeared from the hut in the mountains, they explained Lucy's absence by the statement that she had gone off with a young man, Heaven only knew whither, and that Dick Ashland had gone away with the pair. Lucy's many admirers came to the conclusion that the girl whom they had thought unconquerable had, after all, turned out a woman like the rest of the prairie wenches, and had fallen a prey to the insinuating speeches of a handsome young stranger. From that moment, the interest in her welfare disappeared. Dave made an imposing pretence of a broken heart, but George brazenly asserted that his daughter, having left the parental roof without his authority, might lie on the bed she had made for herself, for all he cared. The result of this line of conduct was that but little enquiry was made after the fate of the supposed fugitives, and even such as the Maclanes pretended to make was naturally and intentionally abortive. In those days, the vast plains swallowed human units as the great sea might, and, unless by chance, or by dint

of persevering and strained enquiry, the whereabouts of Lucy and Herbert could not have been easily discovered. As to Dick Ashland, people had always been wondering why he had been living in that out-of-the-way place, and his habits had always been solitary and retiring. It excited no surprise, therefore, that he should have left the neighbourhood, his assassins having taken care so to strip his cabin as to give every semblance of truth to their story.

The Maclanes had been wise enough in their generation to allow a sufficient stretch of time—more than a year, in fact—to elapse before proclaiming their discovery to the world. In the meantime, they had taken all the necessary steps to secure to themselves the safe and undisputed possession of the land that thus teemed with wealth. The red-handed Fortune smiled, and, by her guilty leer, Lucy was, and remained forgotten.

Nearly three weeks had passed since Lord Cleve's arrival in London, and he had not, for a second time, set eyes on Lady Evelyne Wynter or the Maclanes. He had taken part in none of society's ceremonials, until, one afternoon, in company with Mr. Quenthelm, he strolled into the Royal Horticultural Society's grounds at South Kensington, where a charity fete was being held. The lovely gardens were ablaze with the choicest bloom and green, and filled by

a fashionable throng. Delicate, high-born ladies hawked trinkets and trifles, whilst others had, for the nonce, transformed themselves into stall-tenders and barmaids.

Lord Cleve and Mr. Quenthelm sauntered up and down the broad walks, stopping here and there to purchase or to chat, for, although the young earl knew few persons, his companion had some measure of acquaintance with most. Quite a buzz of excitement followed their footsteps, as everybody wanted to have a look at the young nobleman, whose romantic career, and, perhaps, also his bachelor condition, made him so very interesting. Eye-glasses were raised, and opera-glasses were pointed with but slight ceremony, and Herbert, to escape, if possible, from the well-bred rudeness which dogged him, walked leisurely with his companion towards a more secluded part of the grounds. He thus managed to free himself from the starers who mobbed him, and was about to express to his companion his satisfaction at the result, when he heard himself addressed by name.

"Lord Cleve, won't you buy something from me?"

He turned and found that the speaker was no less a person than Lady Evelyne Wynter.

"Do buy something, Lord Cleve," the lady chatted on, exhibiting a basket with a heterogeneous

profusion of oddities and uselessnesses. "It is for a charity, you know—a hospital—most deserving."

With that the young lady dipped into her assortment of wares, and produced a hand-embroidered cigar case.

"Only five pounds, Lord Cleve, and it's such a deserving charity. I know you won't refuse me."

Lord Cleve naturally neither could nor did refuse. He counted out the five sovereigns, and as he did so, he looked into my lady's languidly smiling eyes. They were big, and they were blue, and although they were neither as big nor as blue as Lucy's, Lord Cleve thought them very beautiful. Lady Evelyne was not as pretty as Lucy—that she could not possibly be—but Lord Cleve thought she was as handsome a young woman—next to Lucy—as he had seen in his life. As he placed the coins on the young lady's extended palm, his finger tips barely touched the soft and velvety hand, and whether it were from unison of feeling, or just for the fun of the thing, both Lady Evelyne and Herbert smiled.

The young lady had no difficulty in admitting that the young earl was a handsome example of distinguished manhood, and harmony of sentiment between the pair was quickly so far established that they began to chat, apparently in fun, of their, as they called it, past and forgotten engagement.

The engagement was not so far forgotten, however, by the young lady at any rate, that she did not open all her batteries of witchery to rekindle, in the young earl's heart the kindly memory which he had so unfortunately lost. "For shame!" Mrs. Grundy will say. "That brazen young woman is engaged to Mr. David Maclane," and Mrs. Grundy is perfectly right. It was wrong. The young lady herself stated that fact to Lord Cleve, with a sly glance at him and another at Mr. Quenthelm, and a faint pretence of wishing to leave. Lord Cleve, however, found Lady Evelyne's society charming, and the young lady, on her side, had forgotten all about her self-imposed duties as a vendor on behalf of charity. She thought the young man much improved by his long residence abroad, and his manner towards her simply delightful. In the result, the conversation degenerated into a not too harmless flirtation, which was kept within bounds by the opportune presence of Mr. Quenthelm. As it was, they became so interested by each other's converse that they did not notice the approach of Lady Gwendale, who, accompanied by Messrs. George and David Maclane, stopped for some seconds in front of the little group without either of the three being aware of her presence. Lady Gwendale acted as a cautious general; she neither appeared to approve nor to rebuke;

she did not even evince astonishment. She was, nevertheless, just a trifle afraid that a word might escape from her daughter's lips which could be misconstrued by Mr. Maclane, and therefore ended the slight temporary embarrassment by saying—

"My dear, Mr. Maclane has been looking for you all over the gardens." Then, seeing that the young earl rose and bowed, she held out her hand. "Lord Cleve," she said, in her blandest tones, "you must allow me to introduce myself, for I am aware that you have most likely forgotten me. I am Lady Gwendale, and your mother was one of my earliest and dearest friends."

The young man, taken aback by her ladyship's sudden apparition, and even more by the presence of the two Americans, whose cold gaze seemed to penetrate him like something uncanny or inexplicably loathsome—he knew not why—stammered a few incoherent words. The moment afterwards he chided himself for his seemingly unreasonable dislike to the Maclanes.

"Now that you know me," continued Lady Gwendale, in her brightest mood, "you must allow me to introduce to you my future son-in-law, Mr. David Maclane."

At these words Lord Cleve discovered a new, and to him reasonable, excuse for disliking the young

Westerner. He was shortly to marry Lady Evelyne Wynter, and, strange as it may seem, the young earl suddenly considered this a personal injury.

David Maclane, in return, looked at the young Englishman as if he could have poisoned him.

"I have an idea," said Lord Cleve to Mr. Quenthelm, as they were walking back, "quite a confused idea, but still an idea, that I have met these men before. I wish Lucy were not so reticent on the subject. The pity is that, the more I try to think, the less my brain will lend itself to the work, and I generally break down hopelessly in any attempt of the kind."

"Why don't you go and see Sir William Cuthbertson?" suggested Mr. Quenthelm. "He is the great specialist in cases of this sort, and some of the cures he has made are nothing short of marvellous."

"I don't think there is much chance for me," Herbert answered. "My injuries, I am afraid, are permanent."

"It cannot possibly do harm to try," the lawyer replied. "It is surely worth while."

"I will take your advice," exclaimed Herbert, with a hot and sudden determination in his eyes. "I'll go and call upon Sir William Cuthbertson to-morrow."

CHAPTER VII.

Herbert lay awake in bed that night thinking that his solicitor's advice might turn out very profitable indeed. It would be delightful to be able to remember incidents and circumstances of his boyish love for Lady Evelyne. It would be very pleasant to be again aware of the feeling he had once entertained for her, of loving words spoken, of tender troth plighted. And, besides that, there were lots of things he would have dearly liked to know—things part and parcel of his past history, and veiled from him by the shroud of his loss. To his mind the vista of the past that would open before his mental eyes had nought but pleasures. No dreaded terrors lurked within its confines, nothing would be unravelled that might discomfort or vex.

"Yes," he said to himself, "I will see Sir William Cuthbertson, if only for Evelyne's sake."

The fashionable surgeon's residence in Mount Street, Grosvenor Square, resembled the reception-hall of a Minister of State, to such a degree was it crowded by more or less distinguished patients.

Young Cleve's case had been sufficiently heralded in all the papers to have already come to the knowledge of Sir William. The great surgeon was, at that time, considered the first living authority for wounds in the head, and especially for those productive of cerebral derangements, and he had, only a few days previously, in private conclave with some of his confrères, pronounced the young nobleman's case a most interesting one. It may have been the remembrance of these circumstances, or it may have been the weight of Herbert's title—I will not say which—that secured to the young earl the entrance to the great man's consulting rooms in advance of those who were, by order of arrival, entitled to priority.

A bland distinguished-looking gentleman was Sir William, whose face brimmed with perpetual good-humour and kindliness. It would have been difficult to consult such a man and not to feel confidence in his ability to help. He had a manner of his own of getting on good terms with his patients from the very first moment, and he himself had admitted that that was half the battle of a medical man's success.

"I felt sure that you would come and see me, my lord," he said, smilingly, holding out both his hands to the young man. "I have heard a great deal about your case, and I admit that it is one of exceeding interest to the world of science."

"It is of exceeding interest to me to know whether I can be cured," Herbert replied with a slight laugh. "The world of science can take pretty good care of itself."

"We will take care of you and the world of science as well," the great surgeon answered; "and I hope both will be the gainers. Sit down there if you please," he added, pointing to a formidable looking arm-chair, fitted with divers sorts of ingenious appliances, "and let me have a look at you."

The examination appeared a protracted one to Lord Cleve. The surgeon not only examined the young man's head with minute care himself, but called in another learned-looking gentleman with whom he held a whispered consultation.

"I have your case quite clear, my lord," he said at last, "and if you will permit me, I will explain it to you. You have received no less than four fractures of the skull, all of which were caused by blows from a blunt rounded instrument. They are not bullet wounds, but such as could only be produced by a weapon wielded hammer-wise, but rounded at the end. Three of these fractures have luckily healed without producing any deteriorating results. But the fourth wound, the one nearly in the centre of the lower part of your forehead, inclining a little to the right, just over the inner corner of the right eye, did

not receive the skilled surgical treatment it required at the very outset. It is one which would have, at any time, necessitated the most delicate treatment, and which is the cause of the mental affliction from which you are suffering. The bone there is not only fractured, but severely indented, and it has been, and is exercising an appreciable pressure upon the brain. Now I am not a believer in phrenology as a science, but the fact is noteworthy nevertheless, that most phrenologists place the seat of memory at the very spot where your wound is located, the memory of places at the bottom where, as you see, the least pressure is exercised, and the memory of occurrences above, where the distress is much more severe."

"And is there a possibility of remedying this state of things?" asked Herbert. "Is there a chance by hook or by crook, of getting my memory back?"

"There is more than a chance, there is a certainty that I should be able to remove the cause of the pressure upon your brain by operation."

"What kind of an operation?" Herbert asked wistfully.

"I should lift the bone which is the cause of the mischief," Sir William answered.

"And what would I have to do, and how long would I have to lay up?" was the young Earl's determined query.

"Ah, there lies the rub," the surgeon replied. "You would have to leave yourself entirely in my hands. The operation would have to take place in a room prepared by my instructions, and in that room you would have to remain for a month at least after the operation, seeing nobody whose appearance could cause you to exercise your mental faculties, and holding no communication with the world—in fact, giving your brain such complete rest after it is relieved from the pressure which now troubles it, as will give it sufficient strength to do its normal work."

"Humph!" the young Earl ejaculated. "I wouldn't be allowed to see anybody?"

"Not a soul, except your attendants."

"And where would you operate?"

"I should have you taken to a house in a quiet village far away from the noise of the world, of the very locality of which you would have no idea, so that it could not possibly be a source of exercise of memory to you."

"If I submit to all this, Sir William," Herbert asked, "can you promise me a cure?"

"I can allow you to hope for one, that should be sufficient," was the great man's smiling answer.

"Are all the precautions which you prescribe imperatively essential?" the young man demanded.

"Imperatively so," was the firm reply. "An un-

toward incident might be productive of danger not only to your mental state, but to your life. You need not be apprehensive of danger, however," he added with a reassuring smile. "If you will abandon yourself to me, I will take care that no untoward accident shall occur."

At luncheon, that day, Herbert informed Lucy of his interview with Sir William. He was so excited by the prospect of recovering his full mental faculties that he did not notice the sudden pallor of that pretty face—the expression of anguish that momentarily flitted across it and then vanished, but left its phantom brooding settled there in a pretty sad dismay. He did not notice the tiny hands that nervously clutched one another, nor the lips half open in trembling silent prayer.

He did not know the dread, the horror of expectation that filled Lucy's soul with blank despair at the thought of his possible recovery. If memory returned to him what would he remember?

All women are more or less born actresses, and, the shock of the first surprise being over, Lucy—pure and truthful Lucy—played a part like any of her meaner sisters. Played a part in a cause to her heart not less holy than that which spurred Judith to become a wanton.

"Yew don't want to remember nothin', Herbert,"

she pleaded. "Yew're jest quite good enough as yew are, an' yew don't want to run no risks. I've seen enough in my time of men bein' butchered about like so many cattle, that it goes agin the grit to think o' them stickin' their knives into yew."

"But, my dear Lucy," remonstrated Herbert; "just think of it. I don't even know how I came by my wounds, and surely it's interesting for a man to know who broke his head, and nearly killed him. Would have quite killed him," he added, with a frank smile and a look of manly gratitude, "if he hadn't had a dear, good, priceless girl like you to stick to him, and get him cured."

Again, he did not notice the look of trembling dismay that gleamed softly and sped into air.

"Now, yew jest don't want to do nothin' o' the kind," Miss Lucy insisted. "I reckon yew know as much as yew want to know, an' if yew follow my advice, yew'll leave well alone. A man's brain ain't to be poked about like an apple or a potato, an' that thar doctor ain't so doggone sartin that he can do what he sez he can, when he's finished."

Herbert saw that the subject displeased Lucy, and he put her objections to the account of anxiety for his safety.

"Since you think it unwise," he said at last, "I

won't have it done—at any rate, not just yet; but I'll turn it over in my mind."

"Yes," Lucy replied, with a contented smile, "think over it, an' take a good long while in thinkin', an' when yew've finished with one lot, go on with another lot, jest to please me, thar's a good boy."

In spite of his flirtations with Lady Evelyne, there was no woman in the world who, to Herbert's mind, stood on anything like the pedestal to which his loving admiration had raised Lucy. Her wish was a kind of unwritten law to him. He thought her objections woman-like, and not at all reasonable, but he admitted them nevertheless.

During the few days that followed, he pondered over Sir William's proposal, and his opinion varied according to the company in which he found himself. When he was with Lucy, he conceded that perhaps she might be right; but when he basked in the sunshine of Lady Evelyne's smiles—a now frequent occurrence, much too frequent to please Mr. David Maclane—his opinion veered in the opopsite direction, and he was anxious to submit himself to the great surgeon's knife.

Figures had always been a worry to Herbert, and now they proved a sore bother to him. The possession of an estate brings its burdens with it, and one of these is that they have to be managed. Tenants

were continually grumbling, and grumbling tenants had to be seen and pacified. Herbert had appointed the morning hour from nine to ten for this purpose, and was seated, on one such morning, behind his writing-desk, a suckling Richelieu administering the affairs of his little state, when the name of Frederick Ashland was brought up to him. He remembered it from his rent-roll as that of one of his tenants at Chauncey Green.

"I wonder what he wants?" Herbert said to himself. "These men are always wanting something or other."

Frederick Ashland was ushered in—a burly, broad-shouldered, broad-chested, John Bull farmer, with a jolly, round and ruddy face beaming with good-temper and good-nature, and clean shaven but for a pair of small side-whiskers.

Had Herbert been able to carry in his mind the slightest memory of Dick Ashland, there he would have recognised the very picture of the murdered man. The resemblance of the two brothers was startling—the living Frederick was the very counterpart of the dead Richard. Even the costume had a similarity, as Dick Ashland always accoutred himself, as far as he could, in the garb of a midland farmer.

"I've bin tryin' to have a word with you, my lord,

these days past," said Frederick Ashland, when the customary courtesies had been passed, "as I've bin in hopes o' gettin' news from you o' that theer brother o' mine—Dick, his name is—as we ain't heerd of this many a day."

"I don't quite understand you, Ashland," said the young Earl. "How can you expect to get news of your brother through me?"

"Why, sure-e-lie, Lord Cleve, you an' Dick was fast friends, an' he did write to me from that outlandish place in America, that you was a-comin' to see him. That's years ago, now. An' then he did write as he had found gold, an' you was a-comin' to help him get it, but I weern't to say nothin' about it to nobody until he'd let me know more on it. But, lor' bless you, my lord, I never heerd no more about it from that day to this, an' never got no hanswer. An' it do tek the shine out of a maan, when his own brother won't write an' say to him how he's a gettin' on."

Herbert had listened to this speech with open mouth and eyes astare.

"You say," he asked, "that your brother wrote to you that I was coming to him to help him get gold?"

"Aye, aye, my lord," was the ready answer.

"And where did your brother live?" Herbert enquired, with a curious interest grappling at his mind.

"Somewheer in the mountains," the yeoman answered. "I don't think as that queer place had a name, but I do remember as I used to send my letters to somewheer in Kansas—that's what I think the place was called; but then, Dick did say as he had to ride some fifty mile or more to get them."

"You mean the Rocky Mountains, I suppose?" Herbert suggested.

"That be they, most likely, to be sure," the farmer answered; "but if you be so good, my lord, as to look at this 'ere scrap—it's the last letter which iver I got from Dick, an' perhaps it'll bring him to your mind, if it be so that you've forgotten him—though it do seem strange and no mistek."

He produced from a worn Russia-leather pocket-book a faded sheet of paper, the folded edges and creases of which had become ragged by wear. Herbert had to exercise care not to tear it while unfolding it.

"Dear Fred," it ran, "luck's mine at last, and yours, too, through that. I have found gold, bushels and bushels of gold. The only difficulty is to get it safely. I have written to young Mr. Herbert Chauncey, who is hunting about two hundred miles from here, and I expect him here within the next two or three days. Give my love to Susan and the chicks, and tell them that Uncle Dick will look after

them now. Don't speak about this to anybody till you hear from me again, as it might be dangerous if it got to be known before the proper time. If you do see any of the young ladies at The Towers, tell them that their brother Herbert was hale and hearty when last I heard from him. and if things turn out as I am sure they will, you will see us both in the old country before Christmas comes round. I'm afraid that this will miss this month's mail. I was going to send it by a neighbour of mine, Mr. George Maclane—".

The young man thought his heart was about to stop as that name stared him in the face. He recovered himself in a moment, however, and went on as if nothing had excited him.

"—but I was afraid to trust him, and I have to send this by an Indian messenger, who, as likely as not, will get drunk at every station before he gets to Fort Bent. Good-bye, dear Fred, and God bless you. Your affectionate brother, Dick Ashland."

He had read the letter aloud, and his clear melodious voice reached every corner of the room. While thus engaged, he had not noticed that Lucy had entered. But, as he looked up, he saw her, pale as death, leaning against the wall for support, with eyes nearly starting from their sockets. The resemblance of the living man to his dead brother had frightened the girl out of her wits, and Herbert.

not guessing the cause of her illness, rushed to her side and placed her half fainting on the sofa. A sip of water refreshed her, and the cheeks that had been white in anguish became flushed with feverish dread. Every word of that letter had cut deep into Lucy's heart, and the mention of her father's name had been like a deadly stab.

"I reckon I'll go to my own room, if you don't mind, Herbert," Lucy whispered, when she had regained her fortitude. "I don't feel at all well."

Young Cleve loaded her with kindly attentions, and rang for the maid, who escorted the girl to her room.

He had not breathed a syllable to Lucy about his feelings concerning that letter.

"I am sorry, Mr. Ashland," he said, "that I have not the slightest memory about your brother. I suppose you have heard of my misfortune, and that will be my explanation to you. But I would be obliged if you would leave this letter in my hands, so that I may make further enquiries on the subject."

"George Maclane, Dick Ashland's neighbour," he muttered to himself when the yeoman was gone. "And Dick Ashland had found gold, and I was to have helped him to get it. And George Maclane has found gold, and Dick Ashland has never again been heard of, and I am here with four great wounds on my head."

He arose and walked up and down the room in a slow, measured tramp.

"And Lucy," he continued, in tremulous self-communion, "has had a desperate quarrel with her father and her cousin, and will not go near them, and will have nothing to do with them. And Lucy is a good, true, honest girl—a kindly, noble girl—who would not leave her father without ample reason."

The tramp up and down became faster, and a dark shadow settled on the young man's brow.

"I can see it all," he continued. "Lucy knows something of this, and her father and cousin are in it, only she is too true to them even now, and will say nothing against them. If there's treachery in it, she'll never denounce them. And she's right, of course. Right and good as she always is. She can't be expected to be a witness against her own father. If ever the word 'brute' was written in a man's face, it is in George Maclane's. Dick Ashland!" he muttered. "Dick Ashland! Dick Ashland!"

The muscles of his handsome face contracted as if in pain.

"God!" he exclaimed, "it is hard. Why can't I remember? Why can't I remember?"

Then, on a sudden, he checked himself, and a look of stern determination took the place of the anguish that had preceded it.

"I *will* remember," he cried. "I *will* remember."

He stopped in front of his table and rang the bell.

"Send at once a messenger to Sir William Cuthbertson, in Mount Street," he said to the man who entered, "and tell him Lord Cleve will call on him at twelve o'clock to-day."

That being over, he set to work arranging his papers with an air of quiet commonplace which proved the intensity of his desire.

"I'll get at the bottom of this," he said, determinedly to himself. "Sir William shall operate on me as soon as ever he will."

CHAPTER VIII.

"Boltons," South Kensington—generally known as "The Boltons"—was, in the year of grace eighteen sixty, one of the fashionable localities of London. The Maclanes, desirous of mixing with fashionable society in London, had chosen a house in "The Boltons" for their habitation.

Both George and David Maclane were suffering from what, in later day Americanism, is termed "swelled head." Although they could not divest themselves of the traces of their Western origin, any more than the leopard can change his spots, both uncle and nephew strove hard to ape London fashion and fashionables.

It must be admitted that London fashion and fashionables put themselves out of their way to give a great deal of encouragement to the Maclanes. London fashion and fashionables required a yearly renewal of the supply of lions to their social menagerie. Now, real big lions were scarce and often very shy; therefore, London fashion and fashion-

ables had sometimes to content themselves with a wretched, starveling semblance of the noble beast, and, as long as a pretence was furnished by a lion's skin and mane, London fashion and fashionables were often compelled to ignore that an ass's body was covered by a yellow hide. It must be confessed that London fashion and fashionables overlooked the defects of their once caught lions with ready alacrity, and in the most amiable way threw dust in their own eyes by discovering all sorts of virtues to which their newly-caught beast could lay but little claim, and by accepting upon the merest hearsay as gospel truth, and by heralding to the world with trumpet blasts, every babbled statement that could possibly bring it credit.

In the case of the Maclanes, the efforts of London fashion and fashionables showed some portion of reason in their madness through the fact that both the Maclanes were marriageable and were wealthy. Now, a lion in fashion is a desirable beast. A wealthy lion becomes a dream of loveliness. But a marriageable wealthy lion—ye gods and little fishes, where shall I find adjectives and adverbs sufficiently to portray the estimation in which he is held by Tyburnia, Belgravia, and Mayfair?

It was but natural that, in the midst of all this, the Maclanes should be spoilt, if the comparative

humanising of two such creatures can be termed deterioration.

If any of the traders at the frontier stations could have come across the Maclanes in their London garb they would have rolled all over the floor in fits of laughter. Both George and David imitated the London dandy. David was waging continual warfare upon a refractory eye-glass that would not fulfil the purpose for which it was bought and stick in its owner's eye. The tightly-fitting frock coats of the mid-Victorian period proved sad instruments of torture to the two Westerners, who had been accustomed to wear the loosely-fitting garments of the prairies. Both of them sported tasselled canes, and both of them had made endeavours—destined to be sad failures—to mix their Rocky Mountain twang with the "haw, haw," which at that time was fashionable in Pall Mall. London society had accepted the Maclanes as lions upon the mere exhibition of their banker's pass books, and upon the publication of their catalogue of virtues by Society papers like "Albert Gate." Society journalism in those days had none of the stings of its more modern and more vigorous namesake. It was good-natured, kindly, and strictly laudatory. Its purpose was to extol the virtues of English society and to make English society feel happy all round. Society

journalism discovered all sorts of virtues for the Maclanes, and, as no harm was thereby done to anybody, the result appeared eminently satisfactory to all.

Many and various had been the assaults by maidens and matrons upon the single blessedness of George and David Maclane. High-born ladies vied with one another to draw the lions into the nets they were spreading for them. As we have seen, no less a person than the only daughter of the Marquis of Gwendale consented to link her name to that of the young American, and all went swimmingly for poor Dick Ashland's assassins until they were frightened nearly out of their senses by their sudden meeting with Lord Cleve.

A guilty conscience had dealt lightly by the two wretches. As a matter of fact, they had both used the pistol and the knife so frequently that the killing of one man more or less made but little difference to them. No ghosts of murdered Banquos troubled their feasts. No ghastly apparitions of Dick Ashland with the bloody streak of a cut throat disturbed their slumbers. Beast-like, they were only amenable to fear, and the only fear to which they were amenable was the fear of detection.

Even that dread had long ago vanished. They were perfectly cognisant of the fact that Herbert had lost

all trace of memory, and, the first shock of the meeting with their victim being past, they became quickly reassured, and, in the privacy of their own home, laughed at themselves for thus allowing themselves to be frightened by a harmless bogey.

Shortly after that they learned, not without trepidation, that Lucy was in London, residing with Lord Cleve. Lucy, they knew, had kept her word, and had been as silent as the grave in which Dick Ashland's bones were resting. They debated with themselves whether or not they ought to go and see her, but finally decided it was best to leave well alone. If Lucy wished to hold communication with them, she would have no difficulty in finding them.

The time passed, and Herbert and Lucy's arrival had made but little impression upon the Maclanes. They were congratulating themselves upon their easy victory, and dipped deeply into the pleasures of the waning London season. Lady Evelyne's flirtations with the young Earl were the only drops of gall in their cup of happiness, but both David and George admitted that what could not be cured must be endured, and that it was wisest to close their eyes until the desirable prize was finally and irrevocably secured.

Since their residence in London they had adopted Lucullian habits, and their meals were habitually

flanked and crowned by huge bumpers of fruity port, and fiercely young and vigorous champagne. They did not admit that either of these had anything like the grip of Missouri apple-jack, and of course they were not to be mentioned in the same breath with Taos whiskey; but what their beverage lacked in ferocity they made up in quantity. Thus it happened that, one day after luncheon, they were sitting over their fifth or sixth bottle of champagne, when David Maclane, who between the whiffs of a huge cigar was reading "Albert Gate," suddenly put down his weed and dropped the paper on the table in front of him in a breathless perturbation.

"Waal," exclaimed George, "who's been made meat of now? Yew look that skeared, one might think the 'Rapahoes were after your top-knot."

David Maclane, for all reply, pushed the paper towards his uncle.

"I'll be doggone if I can make yew out?" cried the latter. "I guess yew've got to be such an elegant critter as yew cayn't speak no more, nohow. What's the sign now?"

"The sign's 'bad Injun,' George," David replied wistfully. "It's dernation bad Injun, an' its 'faces blackened for war.' Read this, an' I guess it'll give yew yewr stomachful, this day and to-morrer, an' a good while to come."

George Maclane cast a disdainful glance at his nephew. He took up the journal and his eyes fell immediately upon the following paragraph:—

"Our readers are probably aware that the young Earl of Cleve, whose happy return to England we announced some time ago, has been suffering from complete loss of memory, the result of some ugly wounds in the head. Lord Cleve has placed himself under the care of Sir William Cuthbertson in the hope that the great surgeon might be able to help him in recovering the valuable mental faculty of which he has been deprived. All London will be glad to learn that, about ten days ago, Sir William performed a most successful operation on his distinguished patient, and that the young Earl's power of memory is returning fast. There is no doubt whatever that, before a month is over, it will be completely restored, and as the young nobleman's career has been a most romantic one, though hitherto a closed book even to himself, we may expect some interesting recitals of the thrilling incidents of his life in America—the most interesting one being naturally the account of the murderous conflict in which he received his terrible wounds."

George Maclane dropped the paper, as his nephew had done before him, and gave a long, low whistle.

"I guess yew're right, Dave," he said. "It's bad

Injun—it's Injun on the war-path, an' powder runnin' derned short."

"What are yew goin' to do?" the younger man asked.

"Do!" exclaimed George. "What can we do?"

"If that young man remembers a hand stretch about Dick Ashland, an' himself, an' us, it will sarve us to a few yards o' rope apiece. It makes me shiver to think of it."

His face had gone ashen, and brought within discernible distance of man's justice, coward fear took possession of him. His teeth rattled and his limbs shook.

"If that young man remembers!" George hissed disdainfully. He hit the table with his clenched fist, making the glasses jump and the decanters rattle. His cruel little eyes glittered more ferociously than ever, and his teeth were set hard in relentless savagery. Damnation!" he cried. "He mustn't remember—he shan't remember! I guess we're not logs. We've got heads, haven't we? We've got eyes, haven't we? We've got hands, haven't we? We've got money, haven't we? An' if we're to swing fur Dick Ashland, I reckon it won't matter much if we cut that young fellow's throat in the bargain to stop his jaw."

"That ain't so easy, George," David answered tremulously. "Yew cayn't get at a man so smack heear

as out in the Rockies. It's just a trifle bigger job to stop his jaw in this hole than if we had him on the Sangre de Christo."

D—n it," viciously exclaimed the elder ruffian, "we've jest got to do it, and the sooner we make up our minds and set to work about it the better."

CHAPTER IX.

The Maclanes had no difficulty in discovering the place where Sir William Cuthbertson had performed his operation and where his distinguished patient was slowly recovering. It was a pretty little cottage standing in a tiny walled garden on a sparsely-frequented road between Shepperton and Halliford-on-Thames. A former owner had given it the fanciful name of "The Nest." The place was within easy reach of London, and although, at a comparatively short distance, the river teemed with buoyant life and revelry, along the lane, shaded by huge elms and wild chestnuts, solitude was made musical only by the feathered songsters of the skies, and the sough of the leaves quivering with the summer breeze.

The nearest habitation, a small house, usually let furnished during the boating season, was about five-and-twenty yards away, and unoccupied at the time. Other residences, strewn here and there along the road, were hidden deep in park-like grounds, and gave rise to no disturbing noises.

The room in which Herbert was lying was situated

on the ground floor of the little cottage. It was spacious, and plainly, but extremely comfortably, furnished. The walls were painted a blueish stone-grey, and no pattern of any kind attracted attention. There were no pictures on the walls, and the doors and windows were hung with curtains of a softly dull-coloured material. The two big windows looked across a small, but beautifully-kept, lawn on to a brick wall smothered with Virginia creeper. The sky-line was nearly hidden by giant elms in the full wealth of their leafy green. All was simply harmonious—no violences of taste or shade shocked the eye. It was homeliness and comfort made solid, and yet placed within such balmy rest as a mountain wilderness could scarcely surpass.

Herbert had to pass his days and his nights on his couch. Thanks to the excellent care bestowed upon him, he had suffered from hardly any fever, and the wound resulting from his operation was healing fast.

Not a soul entered his room but the softly-spoken, grave-visaged, grey-headed attendant, who moved with a noiseless solicitude, and anticipated his every want, his every wish. The hours seemed eternal, but his determination strengthened him and made his temporary loneliness less bitter. All around him solemn silence reigned. His attendant moved

stealthily like a cat, and no disturbing footfall reached his ear from anywhere. It was only at the rarest intervals that the grating of wheels on the soft, clayey road outside became audible, or that a passer-by, more noisy than usual, intruded upon his privacy by the faint sounds of the snatch of a song.

And yet, had he but known it, he would have felt less lonely, from the fact that an anxious, loving heart was watching over him in the same house, that dainty, tiny hands assisted in the preparation of his meals, that a good woman's voice was lifted in nightly prayer for his recovery.

Lucy had succeeded in obtaining Sir William Cuthbertson's permission to live in the cottage with Herbert, upon the express condition that her presence should not be betrayed by sound or sign, that she should remain in the wing of the house opposite to that where young Cleve was stretched on his bed of pain. It can easily be guessed how gladly she consented to these conditions; she would have consented to any terms to be allowed to remain near the man she loved so well.

If there was one person in this world who sincerely hoped and prayed for Herbert's cure, that person was Lucy Maclane; and yet no person in the world—her father and cousin included, could have more dreaded the fatal day when Herbert would be cured;

when remembrance, fierce and relentless, would assert its sway, and ruthlessly dash away the curtain which she had woven at such cost and under such severe trials. Her mind was stretched on the perpetual rack of the most terrible doubt, with but the faintest glimmer of hope piercing the darkness that threatened.

What would Herbert remember? How much would he remember? Would truth stand before him naked, shameless, cold, and cruel? Would he know that her father was an assassin? Would he despise her and bid her go from him?

And yet, so holy is a true woman, that, in her heart of hearts, she prayed that heaven might let him speedily recover.

The young Earl had been lying on his couch something over a fortnight, when the cottage next to the Nest received two visitors. One of them was the landlord of the "Greyhound" Inn, who held the key of the place and was charged with its letting; the second was a middle-aged man, dressed in unassuming gentlemanly grey tweeds, and having the appearance of a person well-to-do in a middle walk of life, of a servant whom fortune had favoured, or of a tradesman early retired from business. He was of medium height, and stoutly built; a bull-neck, gave him a look of forbidding strength, and his

hands, red and blotchy, were evidences of the fact that he had not passed his youth in mere idleness. There was a peculiar cunning about an otherwise insignificant face—the kind of stealth and slyness that would not be deterred from stooping to the mean; a face that would not, by its first sight, secure for its owner a position of trust in a bank. Yet, it was not an unpleasant face, and it grinned with a mixture of cockney and outlandish humour. The small sandy moustache drooped after the fashion, at a later period, burlesqued by Mr. Sothern, as Brother Sam, and gave a peculiar admixture of simplicity to the otherwise not over prepossessing features.

The visitor examined the little house and its grounds with the utmost care. He drew on a scrap of paper a small plan of the place, and if the landlord had stayed with him, he might have been seen measuring with paces the distance between The Nest and the unoccupied house, which boasted of the high-sounding appellation, "Reedon Lodge." The man obtained all particulars from mine host of the "Greyhound"; discussed questions of rent and other conditions, and finally withdrew, after securing a promise from the landlord that he should have the refusal of the place for forty-eight hours.

The person, thus circumstantially introduced at this portion of our history, was Mr. Edward Wall,

known to some as Ned Wall, and to others, especially those who had made his acquaintance out West, during the Pike's Peak Rush, as Pug-nosed Ned. Mr. Ned Wall had, at an early period of his career, done faithful service to Her Majesty, in various of Her Majesty's jails. In the result, Mr. Ned Wall came to look upon his native land, where the liberty to steal was so shamefully denied to the subject, as a very hot-bed of oppression, and the fledgling Blueskin winged away to the freer fields of the Far West. Such is the perversity of fate, however, that Mr. Ned Wall made the amazing discovery, that those who obtain gold by simply digging it from the earth, objected to having it taken from them without their leave, by a young man in whose welfare they took no special interest. Mr. Ned Wall, would certainly, on two several occasions, have been strung up by the neck until dead, had not the powerful intervention of Mr. George Maclane saved him from untimely extinction. Mr. George Maclane had found Mr. Ned Wall an unscrupulous but useful sweep, ready to do any dirty work, as long as his belly was filled, and in addition to that, neat with his fingers and glib with his tongue, an excellent bargainer, and a stony-hearted taskmaster to those placed under his charge. In the end, Pug-nosed Ned reblossomed into Mr. Edward Wall, and became a hybrid between a private

secretary and a valet to both the Maclanes, who, in that capacity, took him with them to Europe.

On the evening of the day when Mr. Edward Wall had inspected Reedon Lodge, the Maclanes were closeted with their representative at The Boltons. Ned exhibited his plan of the lodge, and of the adjoining cottage and grounds, and pointed out the exact location of the room in which Herbert was lying.

George's coldly glittering eye devoured every line, every mark.

"I guess it's all right, Ned," he said, at last. "Only yew've got to make sure of yewr measurements—dead sartin sure. We mus'n't get wrong, right or left, an inch. Yew'll go down to-morrer, an' hire that cottage, and pay him three months' rent on the nail, and if he wants references, say yew're a stranger, an' leave him a fifty-pound note as yewr bond. An', mind yew, it's five an' twenty thousand golden dollars as yew're workin' for, so yew jest fix up yewr hind-sight, an' tek keer that yew don't get euchred, nohow."

A diabolical smile lit up his face.

"We've got it all fixed an' square now, Dave," he exclaimed. "It only wants the pluck an' a week's hard work, an' I guess we'll stop his jaw for ever. He won't remember nothin' about Dick Ashland, nor nobody else, when we've done with him, yew bet."

CHAPTER X.

There were not more than a dozen residences along the lane where Reedon Lodge was situated, and the inhabitants of none of these took any interest in the fact that the little furnished house had been let. The three tradesmen—the butcher, the baker, and the grocer—who called were told by Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, as Mr. Edward Wall chose to call himself, that he obtained his supplies from London, and that a daily fresh quartern loaf, and a rather unusually large supply of eggs, butter, and milk were all that was required. Mr. Sylvanus Thompson had one friend staying with him, who, the tradesmen imagined, was ailing, as he never, on any occasion, showed himself. There was also, so the tradesmen told one another, a tall elderly servant, the baker's boy had seen him. The lad could not in any way describe his features, as the man's face was swathed in a handkerchief, as though he were suffering from a toothache, and he was standing at the end of the rather dark hall. The two last-mentioned personages

must have arrived during the night, as no one had seen them enter the house.

The tradesmen soon became convinced, not only that Mr. Sylvanus Thompson obtained his supplies from London, but also that he was laying in a considerable store. He was continually journeying to and from London in his dog-cart, and on his return invariably brought with him a collection of parcels and boxes of all kinds and shapes. Some of these seemed even to be of considerable weight, for, one day, when Mr. Sylvanus Thompson was resting his horse in front of the "Greyhound," a lad playfully put his hand underneath one of them, and found it too heavy for his boyish strength. It was written down for moist sugar, and rotten bad moist sugar it must have been, the grocer said, to be so heavy.

With all that, Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, his journeyings, and his idiosyncrasies, excited but faint interest in the neighbourhood. The river was swarming with boating men and their ladies, and their joyous laughter rung over the tranquil waters. The inn-keepers and lodging-house proprietors had their hands full, and Mr. Sylvanus Thompson's nearest neighbour, Sir William Cuthbertson, was represented only by the grave-visaged attendant, who seemed to be attending to nobody or nothing but his patient, who asked no questions and permitted no

chatter, and by Lucy, who, never for a moment, left her side of The Nest.

Murder as a fine art is taught to perfection by two professors—masters of invention: cupidity and fear. These fierce and cold-blooded teachers sum up their pupils' ability and capacity of endurance to a nicety, and find for him a way of accomplishing his devilish work most suitable to his habits in life. Thus, a man well versed in the secrets of chemistry, desirous to rid himself of an enemy, would most likely have recourse to subtle poisons. The platelayer who has a deadly quarrel with his railway company loosens a few screws and throws half a dozen sleepers across the line. Thus also George Maclane, with his experiences as a miner fresh in his mind, hit upon the plan of digging an underground mine from Reedon Lodge to The Nest, and blowing Lord Cleve, with his dangerous memory, into atoms.

George Maclane was not a man to do things by halves, or without careful consideration. Every point had been weighed, talked over, and decided upon with due deliberation. To the servants at The Boltons the information had been vouchsafed that their masters were taking a short tour in the country, and Mr. Edward Wall was left in charge in their absence. Nobody had seen them enter Reedon Lodge, and nobody would see them leave. The only person

upon whose shoulders the crime would be laid was Mr. Edward Wall, and he was promised five thousand pounds and twelve hours' start to get away. The actual gold and notes were exhibited before the young man's greedy eyes, and in doing so Mr. George Maclane made the one mistake in his otherwise nicely-calculated arrangements. He allowed Mr. Edward Wall to see that a very much larger sum in sovereigns and notes was kept in the strong box at The Boltons.

The murderous plan was simple enough. They would lay two three-hour fuses to make sure of success, in case by any possible accident one of these should fail. They would resume their own garments, and in the middle of the night walk as far as Windsor, where they would take the early morning train for some station along the Great Western line, and thence pretend to be engaged on a walking tour. In the meantime, the mine would have exploded and annihilated Lord Cleve. They had never been seen in the business, and could not be suspected. As to Mr. Edward Wall, it was his own interest to get away and save his neck.

Of course, there was the remote danger of failure and detection, but they both agreed that it was not more profitable to be hanged for the murder of Dick Ashland than to run the risk of the added charge of

having, for a second time, attempted to take Lord Cleve's life. On the one side, the near certainty of exposure and retribution stared them in the face; on the other, the possibility of escape and continued fortune grinned temptingly.

The ground had been measured by Ned Wall, and in the dead of the night George himself climbed the dividing wall, and made sure of his position. He could not possibly fail in direction or disposition. The work of sinking the small shaft and of digging the mine proved to be more troublesome than they had bargained for. Luckily for them, they had to dig only through a sandy, gravelly soil, at the bottom of which they found a stiff clay through which they were able to run their tunnel without the necessity of structural supports. But the work had to be done with the utmost caution, slowly and gradually, so that no sound should reach the outer world. They had to lie on their stomachs for hours, and to use their tools in the most guarded manner. As the narrow tunnel increased in length, the air became stifling their own breath half suffocated them, and time after time they had to make a speedy exit to escape personal danger. They slept in the room overhead, and the blinds there, as well as on the ground floor, were kept continually closely drawn.

The lower room soon assumed the appearance of a

casemated breast-work in war time—with its furniture piled in one corner, the carpet taken up, the floor partly removed, the great, black, gaping hole in the centre, with the excavated earth heaped against the walls, and numerous parcels and boxes, containing gunpowder and guncotton, stacked ready for use. Diggers' and miners' tools were strewn all over the place. The only article of furniture which remained in use was a mahogany table, scratched, soiled and damaged, and two equally ill-used chairs, the red damask covers of which were torn and stained beyond repair.

Instead of a week, twelve interminable days passed before they saw themselves near the end of their scheme. It was a lovely summer night, and all the world around was hushed in balmy sleep, when the two Maclanes emerged from their fiendish hole, utterly tired and worn out, but exultant with a hellish joy at the nigh approach of the result. The mine was dug. Right underneath Lord Cleve's chamber a space of some four feet cubed had been dug out, and this was in the course of the morrow to be filled with explosives. Early in the morning Ned Wall was to receive his five thousand pounds and to be allowed to escape; in the evening the fuses were to be laid, and three hours after that the Earl of Cleve would no longer be able to remember anything.

The evening was warm and the perspiration was standing in great drops on the two wretches' faces. They refreshed themselves with their usual beverage, neat brandy, and on this occasion bottle after bottle was emptied before, with a toss of the head, and a half surly "Good night, Ned," David and George Maclane groped their way upstairs and threw themselves on their beds. Fifteen minutes afterwards they were both snoring soundly.

Now it would have been an astonishing fact if Mr. Edward Wall had been able to act honestly even towards his companions in crime. Mr. Edward Wali was a thief by education and profession. Thieves have, like other mortals, a shrewd perception of quantities in arithmetic, and Mr. Edward Wall conceived the idea that it would be more profitable tc steal the larger sum of money at The Boltons, than to be contented with the smaller one offered him by the Maclanes. Perhaps, who knew, he might be able to steal both, and that would certainly be the most satisfactory arrangement. In addition to that, Mr. Edward Wall had been turning over in his mind the murderous scheme, and its dangers to his precious neck. An apparently brilliant idea struck him. If Lord Cleve were blown into smithereens, the person immediately implicated would be himself, and pursuit would be hot and furious

after him; but if he were to hoist Messrs. Maclane with their own petard and blow them to atoms instead, it might so happen that the public would say "Serve the wretches right. They fell into their own trap." He weighed the two courses. On the one hand five thousand pounds and the bloodhounds of the law at his heels within twelve hours, himself the first person suspected and tracked and hunted. On the other hand, the chances of a very much larger booty, and pursuit nothing near as deadly, nor as swift—in fact, no proof whatever that the Maclanes had not ended their miserable existences by an accident interrupting their devilish scheme.

Mr. Edward Wall had passed his boyhood under an expert professor in the art of picking pockets. He strengthened his shaking nerves by huge draughts from the remaining brandy bottles, and then, taking off his shoes, he stole upstairs.

The two men were sleeping soundly. Ned knew the disposition of the room perfectly, and groping his way about noiselessly as a cat, he crept to George Maclane's bedside, and from underneath his pillow with a cleverness and delicacy only possible to the experienced pickpocket, he took the latter's waistcoat without so much as ruffling a breath of the sleeper. In the pocket of that garment he found the bunch of small keys among which he knew would be the one that

opened the strong box at The Boltons, and he replaced the waistcoat as softly and as unperceivedly as he had taken it. Hanging over a chair, by the sleeping man's bed, was his coat, and Mr. Wall without further ado drew from his pocket the leather wallet which he knew contained the notes that were to be his reward on the morrow. Then, without as much as a breath, he stole downstairs again and assured himself by the light of a small shaded lamp that he was really in possession of the objects of his search.

All this being done with a neatness and deliberateness that stamped him as an expert pickpocket of high proficiency, Mr Wall cut, with a big jack knife, the strings of the parcels containing the gunpowder and removed the already open tops of the boxes filled with the same explosive and with guncotton. He spread heaps of this in a semi-circle on the floor Behind this he piled the rest of the hellish material, and filled the crevices with loose gunpowder. Then he put the heavy boards of the broken floor on the centre lot and overtopped these again with a few shovelsful of the clayey earth lying in the corner of the room. He did his work noiselessly, nothing clanged or fell, and it was all completed with barely a sound. As if to satisfy a spirit of daintiness, he washed his hands and face, combed his hair, and brushed his clothes, and gave a glimpse into a small pocket

mirror to be sure that no speck soiled his face. Then he took from the packet containing them, half a dozen fuses and cut them at the point marked three hours. It was ten o'clock, and as he lighted the devilish things and so placed them that their ends were well inserted among the loose pile, he calculated that he could reach The Boltons and be away again before they would do their appointed work.

Without a look back, he opened the front door and went out. He stole on tiptoe to the gate, and closed it silently behind him. Then he walked swiftly to the "Greyhound," where, already during the day, he had ordered his dog-cart and horse to be kept ready for him.

The animal was fresh and swift, and travelled over the eighteen miles of smooth road in something under an hour and a half.

The servants at The Boltons had been accustomed to see Mr. Wall arrive and go away again at all sorts of hours, and bearing all sorts of articles. They naturally made no attempt to follow him upstairs, nor to watch his actions in his employers' rooms.

At one o'clock that night the steamer "Josephine" sailed from St. Katherine's Docks for Boulogne. Among its passengers was a pug-nosed man, who, in spite of the balmy warmth of the summer night, had half hidden his face in a muffler. That gentleman was Mr. Edward Wall.

Mr. Edward Wall was at that moment the proud possessor of nearly fifty thousand pounds in notes of the Bank of England and the Bank of France, and of a not insigificant sum in golden sovereigns and napoleons.

In the meantime, the fuses at Reedon Lodge were burning slowly.

CHAPTER XI.

Nearly a month had elapsed since the operation was performed on Herbert, and the great surgeon's predictions of success had been amply justified. The wound had closed again, and a healthy flush was spreading over the previously pale face.

For nearly a month the young man had not seen a soul except Sir William or his attendant; he had not set eyes on a book or newspaper; he had written no letters, nor received any. Not a disturbing sound of the outer world had penetrated to his place of self-appointed confinement, and whether he were north, east, west, or south of London he knew not.

As his bodily strength increased, the traces of his once-lost mental faculty returned. Scenes of his childhood that had been shrouded as by a dark veil shot into the light of memory with refreshing sweetness. He again remembered his father, of whose appearance he had retained no recollection, and the kindly, lovely face of his dead mother smiled at him again. He remembered the gladsome days at Chauncey Towers, his boyish gambols, his inter-

course with lads of his own age, and over it all beamed the contented approval of a happy mother. Then came his schooldays, his combats at Eton, and his youthful love for the pretty girl who had since blossomed into the stately Lady Evelyne.

The evening would close with some such recollection as this, and though the effort fatigued the still weak brain just a trifle, he would be glad to wake in the morning refreshed by the memories which had been, after a fashion, newly-born to him.

There was nothing in his surroundings which could possibly induce his mind to tire itself by undue efforts; but, bit by bit, fragments of his past life sprang upon him as if from hidden ambushes of the soul—some agreeable, others less so. He remembered the rollicking, roystering of his University times, and the hundred-and-one flirtations of the days that followed. Then came the memory of his disgrace with his parents, and with the parents of Lady Evelyne, of his journey to the West, and of his struggles and wanderings out there.

All this welled like a limpid stream, cool and refreshing. There was little that jarred, and but here and there a sad memory left a darkish spot upon an otherwise fair page.

He had been thinking of Lady Evelyne—what a handsome wife she would make, what a distinguished

sharer of his honours and of his titles, a partner in life to be proud of. Yet there was something that failed to touch his heart about her image. She seemed cold and flighty, and her professions were thin as air, a very butterfly of thoughtless buoyancy; a beautiful moth whose wings might be torn and soiled by a rough touch.

He thought that he liked Lady Evelyne, and he remembered that his boyish fancy had gone straight out to her and had thought her the one woman in the world with whom he might be happy.

He remembered how, during many a dark, bleak night on the prairies, her picture had shone upon him in his dreams like a beacon of flaming hope to guide him to derring-do. It was a beautiful picture, but its beauty was like marble, white and cold.

Then another face would dawn upon him in the haze of his enwrapping dreams. A rosy, pretty, lovable, kissable face, with pouting cherry lips, and dimpled cheeks, with big, softly-beaming, tender blue eyes; a sweet face—a face that glowed with womanly life and womanly truth; a face, the sight of which made his blood flow faster and his finger-ends tingle, and made him remember that he was a man. He might have admired a dozen Lady Evelynes, and passed them coldly by, but Lucy's face had the magic charm of hot and budding womanhood upon

him, and as he traced, line by line, the familiar face, he blessed the stars that had sent such an angel across his path.

On a sudden, he came to think that he did not remember how or where he had first met her, and the fierce effort of recollection became a source of fatigue to him. He passed a day or two in this state of perplexing doubt, and as he did not know where to commence, the picture that formed itself before his eyes was always vague and shapeless.

Then a desire, sharp and strong, asserted itself. He wanted to see Lucy; he wanted to read the secret of his past in her eyes; he wanted Lucy herself to furnish the key that would unlock the mysterious shrine.

He was not aware that Lucy was in the house. On the very morning of the day on which the Maclanes completed the actual labour of their fiendish task, Sir William Cuthbertson paid a visit to The Nest.

The surgeon was vastly pleased with the progress his patient had made, and replied to the latter's insistant prayer for renewed communication with the outer world with a reassuring smile.

"All in good time, my lord," the medico said. "We must be sure to be able to walk before being allowed to run."

"But think of it, Sir William," the young man whimpered. "I've been here a month without seeing even Miss Maclane."

"Do you really wish to see Miss Maclane?" the surgeon asked. "Would it content you to see Miss Maclane?"

Young Cleve drew up his eyebrows, as if in amazement at the question.

"Do I really wish to see Miss Maclane?" he repeated. "Why, Sir William, if you had been left like myself, without speaking to a soul who looks as though he had a soul, don't you think it would please you to speak to a pretty girl who, you know, would do anything in the world to serve you?"

"Now, now, now," the medical adviser remonstrated. "This will never do. We are getting enthusiastic, and we are not strong enough for that kind of thing yet. 'Slow and sure' must be our motto."

"Don't you think you're a little too cautious, Sir William?" Herbert pleaded. His eyes brightened, and he looked the old gentleman in the face. "Do send to London for Miss Maclane," he continued. "I should be so pleased if you would."

"Well," replied the surgeon, "since we are so very obstinate on this point, science, I suppose, will have to overstep the bounds of caution and to be unusually

lenient. Now, if you can get yourself to imagine that Miss Maclane is living with you at this very moment, in this very house—to imagine only, mind you—just at the other side of this door, for instance, and if you think you can accustom your mind to this imagined state of things for a whole day, I may send Miss Maclane to you this evening, and I may allow you, if the night is fine, to have a walk with her in the garden."

The young Earl grasped both Sir William's hands and shook them heartily.

"Thank you, Sir William," he exclaimed, "thank you!"

The rest of that day was one long stretch of expectant excitement to him. He was to see Lucy. The thought brought back the vigour of his early love, and banished every flickering breath of his affection for Lady Evelyne. Lucy stood again before his mind's eye, and as he was sitting by his open window in the cool and breezy summer evening, with his gaze fixed on the cascades of greenery on the old wall opposite, that homely background changed to a giant rock reaching skywards hundreds of yards, with the blue of the heavens gleaming above. A simple rude log hut nestled against the side of the rock, and a primitive road, overgrown with moss and weeds, ran in front of it.

He was there. He remembered that very well. He was dressed in the buckskin hunting shirt, and the fringe-edged buckskin trousers of the frontiersman; a broad-brimmed felt hat shaded his bronzed face; his feet were encased in moccasins, and he sat on a horse that was caparisoned with a Mexican saddle and trappings.

And Lucy was there. How well he remembered her now. How well he remembered that sun-bonnet and that homely gown. He remembered how his heart had gone out to that pretty face at first sight. He remembered how he had said a few dainty nothings to the girl, and had ridden away mountainward. Where had he ridden to? Here the picture became confused again, and memory declined to serve him.

He walked up and down his room, and with the soft air bathing his face he became more composed. He made another effort. Fred Ashland appeared to him, dressed in a mixture of the garb in which he had seen him only a month back, and of that in use among the mountaineers. It was Fred Ashland, and it was not Fred Ashland—there was something perplexing about the man—and Fred Ashland received him cheerily, and told him that he had found gold and that he required his help.

On a sudden, the remembrance of Dick Ashland's

letter, but lately in his hand, flashed across his mind, and the scene stood revealed to him, distinct and clear.

"Great heavens!" he cried, "that's Dick Ashland ! Dick Ashland ! Dick Ashland ! The man who has never been heard of again—the man who found the gold—the brother, and the living image of that man who came to me the other day."

He sank into his arm-chair, and sat there stonily, tapping the floor with his foot. But Lucy's face gleamed again in the blue twilight, and he remembered that, in a few moments, he was to shake her hand, to assure himself again of her kindly sympathy, of her love.

The expectation soothed his anxiety, and left him hopeful and bright. He waited, as he thought, for an hour or more, and then he thought another hour passed. Sir William had promised that he should see Lucy that night, and Lucy had not yet come.

The last gleams of day had sunk in a flood of amber light behind the tree-tops, and night had settled over the scene with soft and pearly blues. Herbert was still thinking of the woman he loved, and who loved him so well, when the door of his room opened noiselessly, and—yes—there was Lucy, stretching out both her hands to him, her face a little paler and a little sadder than when he had last seen it, but still

as lovely and as sweet as ever. There was the warmth of surpassing joy about their mute greeting, and for a few moments, they stood looking into each other's eyes, while a silent tear ran down Lucy's face.

But he had so much to tell her. He grew warm upon the subject of his newly recovered faculty, and she listened as if she drank life and happiness with every word. He was so glad to be able to tell her all he remembered, his boyish history, his days at school and afterwards, and he wandered on to his rovings on the prairies. Lucy's face became paler yet, and a hushed awe trembled on her brow.

He told her all that he remembered about their first meeting, and about his encounter with Dick Ashland. Suddenly, a look of horror crept over his features. He started up, as from a fearful dream, and stared at the girl who sat in front of him.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "it's come back to me! It's come back to me! It was David Maclane who murdered Dick Ashland, and who tried to murder me!"

He rose, writhing his arms in the air, and with staring eyes, he retreated a step or two.

"I can see him as if it were now," he added, in nervous rapidity. "I can see him in the moonlight. I am lying here, and Dick Ashland is lying there." He pointed with outstretched fingers to two distinct

places on the carpet. "We are both shot—those fiends, the Maclanes, have shot us from the gulch head above. I can see David Maclane drawing a big knife across Dick Ashland's throat, and the blood is spurting all over him as he kneels, and I fire at the hound from where I lie; and he comes running towards me, and grips me by the throat, and takes my pistol from me and beats me with it on the head—savagely, furiously. And I hear a woman's voice, crying 'Stop! stop!' and I can see you, Lucy—you Lucy—coming down the gulch side."

The hot tears were streaming over his face. His breath heaved as if in suffocating agony, and his hands quivered by his side.

Lucy had risen also, and was standing there like a white statue of despair, wringing her hands in voiceless, tearless torture.

He gazed at her long and intently, drawing his breath in vain efforts to speak. At last he clutched his hair, and cried :—

"Your father and your cousin murdered Dick Ashland—and you—you saved my life."

He fell down on his knees, and dragged himself to where she stood, and covered her cold hand with kisses.

"You angel of angels! Why did I not know ere

this what I owe to you? Why do I remember it only now?"

When the picture of that fearful scene was completed, and he had not pushed her from him in disgust as the daughter of an assassin; when he had only found words of praise for what she deemed but her duty humbly done, the warm fountains of her heart were loosened, and Lucy found relief in balmy tears. Her heart-strings, strained to breaking nearly, again made tender music. She stooped to him, and obeying her gentle impulse, he rose to his feet.

They were both overstrung in mind. Sir William had permitted them a walk in the garden, and they stepped out into the sweetly cool night.

How long they walked up and down there, with barely a word spoken now and then, neither of them knew.

The heavens glittered with their canopy of stars; and the ghostly light of the moon spread like a pearly foam over the sward and the flower-clad borders.

They walked round to the other side of the house, where a bench invited them to a momentary rest. It was now Lucy's turn to open her heart. He knew all now, all that she had hoped to hide from him—her father's crime, her cousin's guilt. Her task was ended, she said; fairer hands than hers would smooth his path—a worthier woman than she would bring

him love and affection. All that remained to her now was to go away—far away—far away from him and from the world, to some spot where, forgotten by those she knew, she might bring solace to some who were suffering.

He started up as in a fright.

"You want to go away, Lucy?" he cried. "You want to leave me because your father is guilty? You, the truest woman on this earth! No, Lucy; I know you better now than ever I did, and your father's guilt can bring no stain to you."

At that moment, on a sudden, a fierce, fiendish, unearthly roar grew into a hundred deafening crashes not far from them. The very earth seemed to tremble, and their frightened eyes were blinded by a fiery glare. Thunder-crash succeeded on thunder-crash, and a perfect hailstorm of iron and stone rained about them without touching them.

David and George Maclane's hellish scheme had brought retribution on their own heads.

CHAPTER XII.

The "Morning News," of 18th July, 1860, contained the following paragraph:—

"A terrible, and up to this moment totally inexplainable, explosion of gunpowder occurred about one o'clock this morning at Reedon Lodge, a small house standing in its own grounds, on a lane between Shepperton and Halliford-on-Thames, about nineteen miles from Charing Cross. Mr. Samuel Bond, the proprietor of the "Greyhound" Inn, at Shepperton, a few weeks ago, let the house to Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, who lived in it with a sick friend, whose name is unknown, and an elderly servant. Mr. Thompson was not in the house at the time of the disaster, but it is feared that both the other men have become victims to the explosion. The house has been completely destroyed, and fragments have been found a quarter of a mile away. Considerable damage has also been done to the next building, The Nest, belonging to Sir William Cuthbertson, but, luckily, the Earl of Cleve, and a young lady, and an attendant, who were staying at The Nest at the time, escaped without injury."

The "Morning News," of 20th July, contained the following:—

"We can now amplify the lengthened and detailed account, given in our issue of yesterday about the explosion at Reedon Lodge, by some startling and horrifying particulars. Upon the removal yesterday, by the workmen engaged in the task, of the debris of the gutted place, a shaft about ten feet deep was discovered in the centre of the floor of the lower room. The men who descended found that it communicated by an excavated narrow tunnel with a small dug-out chamber underneath the room in which the Earl of Cleve has lately been confined. This, in addition to the discovery of the packet of unexploded fuses, and the large amount of gunpowder that had been stored at Reedon Lodge, points inevitably to a dastardly, but happily by Providence frustrated, attempt upon the life of the young earl. The matter is now in the hands of the authorities at Scotland Yard, and active researches are being made for Mr. Sylvanus Thompson, who has not yet shown himself, and whose whereabouts are totally unknown. We understand that the Earl of Cleve has offered a reward of a thousand pounds for the discovery of the perpetrator or perpetrators of this crime, and we are happy to add that Lord Cleve, who, as our readers are aware, has only just recovered from a

dangerous operation, is none the worse for the accident."

The "Morning News," of 23rd July, published the following:—

"The accumulated evidence concerning the explosion at Reedon Lodge, Halliford-on-Thames, becomes daily more appalling. It has now been incontestably proved that the horribly-mangled remains of the two men killed by the explosion are those of Mr. David Maclane and Mr. George Maclane, two American millionaires, residing at The Boltons, South Kensington, who had lately attracted a very great deal of attention in London society, Mr. David Maclane having been engaged to be married to Lady Evelyne Wynter, only daughter of the Marquis of Gwendale. The awful news has spread consternation in fashionable circles, and people are asking with bated breath whether the Maclanes are the victims or the originators of an attempted dastardly crime."

The "Morning News," of 27th July, said:—

"No doubt whatever remains at the present moment that the wretched men, George and David Maclane, became, by the intervention of an avenging Providence, the victims of their own fiendish scheme to assassinate Lord Cleve. The earl has informed the authorities that David and George Maclane were the men who had attempted to murder him in the

Rocky Mountains, and that it was David Maclane who had inflicted upon him the terrible wounds which had brought about his total loss of memory. The motive for this second attempt on Lord Cleve's life was the fear of discovery and conviction, resulting from the earl's newly-regained faculty of memory."

The "Morning News," of 16th September, 1860, said:—

"The English Consulate at Paris has received information that a very large sum of money in notes of the Bank of England and Bank of France has been found upon the body of Herbert Vavasour, an English gentleman, who has died of delirium tremens at the Hotel des Etrangers. No papers or documents of any kind were found giving a clue to the deceased's friends or relatives, and the money remains in the possession of the French police."

From the "Morning News," 26th September, 1860:—

"The body of the man calling himself Herbert Vavasour, lately deceased in Paris, has been recognised as that of Edward Wall, a convicted thief. The numbers of the notes found upon him proved that they were issued by the Bank of England to David Maclane who was killed in the Reedon Lodge explosion."

The newspapers of the year 1860 do not show that any further evidence was adduced to prove who was the actual perpetrator of the Reedon Lodge outrage. I am, therefore, justified in believing that it remained one of those mysterious crimes which the London police have been unable to unravel.

L'ENVOI.

"Mr. Quenthelm has settled it all, my dear Lucy," said the Earl of Cleve to the beautiful young countess, "and we will not touch one copper of these blood-stained millions. A hundred thousand pounds go to Fred Ashland, and three hundred thousand pounds are divided among his three children. The London charities get a million; twenty thousand pounds go to the Staffordshire hospitals, and the rest is distributed among charitable institutions in America. Are you contented now, my dear?" he asked.

She threw her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Yes, darling," she said, with a tear brimming in her big blue eye. "I am happy now—as happy as ever I hope to be in this wicked world."

THE END.

THE

OUTLAW OF WHITE-WATER GULCH:

An Incident of Early Frontier Life in the Rockies.

BY HENRY HERMAN.

The shades of night were black over a little valley hemmed in on all sides but one, by mighty crags that towered heavenwards, rugged and sheer. Great pines—monsters born of the seed of a predeluvian forest—lined the edges of the canyon, and their overhanging branches added to the gloom. High overhead the sky shone a dark, cold, topaz blue.

On a sudden, a faint gleam of light broke over the ridge that eastward closed in the gulch—a merely paler tint that made the jagged line of the hills look blacker. The glow spread, and, in the midst of it, shaped themselves the outlines of a peak, a dull, silver grey, with a halo of scintillating mist surrounding it. Then shining specks danced upon the mountain cap, swelling in intensity, until that snow-clad giant blazed with white, silver light, whilst all

around it expanded the softest, purest, palest blue. This colour changed, as that daily repeated marvel of nature—God's sunrise, nowhere more glorious than in the Southern Rockies—produced itself, and the horizon became one mass of variegated, burnished, fiery gold. The mountain ridges fairly rippled with red light, and on the nearer hills, foliage and herbage asserted themselves with their pleasing greenery against the hard, metallic purple of the rocks.

Down in the little valley it was still nearly dark. One of the thousand mountain torrents that rush prairiewards, and, growing into streamlets and streams, flow to feed the mighty Arkansas, gurgled and quarrelled over a hundred rocks and boulders in the centre of the canyon. There was a little, eddying pool at one spot where the water, after dashing itself against a big stone, fumed and fretted for the space of a few hands measure, and then lay still and placid—a tiny lake of a score of yards' circumference. The edge of the little lake was smothered with ferns and high grass and wild geraniums and close to it the simplest and roughest mountain shelter had been built of pine branches set up slopingly and covered with pine needles and earth, until they afforded protection against the dews of the night—for rain was little to be feared at this early summer-time of the year.

That the uncouth construction was inhabited could easily be seen by the objects that surrounded it. Strips of elk meat were hanging to dry from long poles, laid horizontally across posts made of young saplings. The half-skinned and partly-butchered carcase of a bighorn was lying across a rock, and upon the small patch of even green sward behind the rude hut various articles of clothing were stretched broadly, evidently to be exposed to the influence of the then rising sun.

What in the hazy light appeared but two shapeless bundles were lying one at each end of the improvised shelter. As the great golden orb heralded its ascent over the top of the ridge by swiftly dispelling the shadows of the canyon, one of the bundles moved, and the big, double Navajo blanket dropping aside, revealed the figure of a woman who, sitting upright, shook a luxuriant mass of glossy brown hair from her face and chest, and swung it behind her with one lithe and graceful movement of the head. She was a young woman, straight and buxom, a strapping lass of some one or two and twenty, and as she rose to her feet, she presented a picture of savage beauty such as one would hardly have expected to meet at the bottom of a lonely Rocky Mountain gulch. Her bare arms and neck were bronzed by sun, wind, and weather, and a pair of

flashing, blue eyes lit up a comely, nearly nut-brown face. She looked about her irresolutely for a moment, and then arranging her slightly disordered grey woollen petticoat and jacket, she walked to the edge of the little pool, and tucking up her skirt, waded into the midst of it. There she splashed the cold water over her neck and face, and twisted her mass of hair into a knot at the back of her head.

The rough-and-ready ablution being over, she returned to the little erection, and fetching flint, steel, and tinder from her resting place, she took from a pile of pine cones that lay stored a little distance from the hut a handful, and started to light a fire.

The thick, grey smoke was curling away lazily into the balmy, tranquil morning air, and the young woman, having with a butcher's knife cut some fragments of meat from the carcase of the bighorn, was preparing to arrange these ready to be cooked on little sticks, to be placed among the hot ashes and the live coal at such time as the fire would have reached the proper stage, when the bleating of a troop of the wild Rocky Mountain sheep became audible at a distance. The girl listened and scanned the line of the rocks above, in the direction whence the sounds proceeded. The bleating became sharper and approached closer, and on a sudden, some eight

or ten of the animals could be seen bounding, at a helter-skelter rate, along the edge of the precipice which closed in the gulch on the east. There they stopped for a second and looked about. Then one ram, bigger than the rest, made a bold jump some twenty feet downwards on the bush-covered ledge, and alighting on his huge horns, gathered himself up and dashed away, along what seemed to be a mere seam in the mountain face. He crossed at one bound the waterfall which formed the torrent below, and then flew away on to the crags on the other side. The whole troop followed him, head over heels, hustling and jostling, but as sure-footed as if they had rushed along a smooth plain.

The young woman was well accustomed to the sight of this big game, but she was startled to see them fly away at such desperate speed. That was an infallible sign that man, the destroyer, was on their track. She ran quickly to the other bundle that was lying in the hut, and shook it.

"Git up, dad," she whispered. "Thar's sign."

A gaunt, grey-faced, thin-lipped, grey-bearded figure rose slowly from the ground. It was an old man, looking older than he might be, his long, grey hair falling over his angular, bony shoulders, and his lean, sinewy arms stretching out from the ragged shreds of sleeves of a flannel shirt that had once

been red. He had blue eyes like the girl's, but whilst hers were deep and sparkled kindly and youthfully, the old man's were shifty and hard, and sullen. He drew a long and lean hand, upon which the veins stood like maps of blue cords, across his mouth, and blinking his eyes for a moment, as if displeased at being thus summarily aroused from his slumbers, he asked gruffly—

"Sign? Whar? What sign?"

At that moment the crack of a rifle sounded in the air and echoed among the hills, and one of the troop of the skeltering mountain game bounded high in the air, and then rolled sideways down the precipitous incline up which he was flying.

The old man jumped up and stood with staring eyes.

"It's white man," he hissed, gnashing his teeth and clutching his sparse, long, grey hair. "That's a Mississippi rifle, Jess. Dernation! I thought I'd fixed a spot whar no man, white or red, would get to; an' I'm sold at last."

His claw-like fingers gripped the collar of his ragged shirt at either side of his chest, and tugged at it in excited, nervous strain.

"Lie down, dad," the girl exclaimed calmly. "I'll see what it is. Thar's plenty o' time to sing out

afore they can git at yew, an' when they do come, yew ain't took yet."

"It's all up," growled the old man. "It's hoss an' beaver gone. I don't keer. I'm dog tired o' this derned caching anyhow."

The girl bent her head to listen more attentively.

"Thar's only two of 'em," she said, quietly, "or I ain't got no ears in my head."

"Yes," he retorted; "thar's only two of 'em, but they'll come back with a dozen more, an' then it'll be a rope an' a cotton-wood branch for me; and no mercy, neither. I ain't a fox or a cayute," he cried, in mental agony, "to be hunted. If I did kill him—fire an' fury—thar's other men bin killed as well as he."

With that he dived into the hut and crawled underneath his blanket, where he lay with his legs drawn up to his body, and his face and head covered, to all appearances a mere bundle as before.

His surmise proved correct. The girl had barely time to run to a rock a little further down the bank of the torrent, whence she could get a better view of the plateau above, when men's voices were distinctly heard calling to one another on the top of the gulch. In the breezy mountain stillness of the early morning, when but here and there a wood-pigeon breaks the solemn silence with its cooing, or some

smaller bird wings in melodious chirping through the rustling leaves, the slightest sound—a whisper even—is heard with marvellous clearness at a long distance.

A minute or so afterwards, a young man, clad trapper-fashion, in fringed buckskin, and wearing a big, broad-brimmed, black hat, appeared at the edge of the precipice, rifle in hand.

"He's down, over thar, Bill," he shouted back to someone who was following him, "I did hit him plump centre."

He stopped suddenly, in natural and unfeigned astonishment at seeing the girl.

"A woman, by gosh!" he cried, cheerily.

Another bright and manly voice answered him from somewhere among the rocks above.

"A woman, Bob? Yew ain't drunk enough whisky yet, I reckon, as to make yew see things; an' yew ain't half the liar yew used to be. A woman! Wagh!"

As the girl looked, straining her eyes in the direction of the voices, another figure jumped, as if by magic, on to the ridge line above, and the two men stood there, dark against the glistening snow-clad peak, and gazing down into the valley, whilst their movements betrayed their surprise.

"Hallo, down thar!" shouted at last the man whom the other had called Bob.

"Hallo!" answered the girl.

"How can I git my ram?" he asked. "This looks like the side of a house."

"Yew can climb down to whar he lies," the girl replied. "Yew'll get your feet wet, that's all."

"Across that waterfall?" the man enquired, pointing to the place.

"Yes," she retorted, "across that, an' then up agin."

"Thank yew," the hunter shouted. Then pausing a second and scratching his head, he added, "An' we won't have to come down to whar yew are?"

"No, sirree," was the ready answer. "Yew ain't got no bisness down hyar. It'll only give you a heap o' trouble for nothin'."

"Come along, old hoss," cried the other man, gleefully. "Yew cayn't git a squint at a petticoat, Bob, without wantin' to wriggle all around it. Let's fetch that ram, Bob, an' I bet a plew, it'll take some fetchin'."

The two frontiersmen were in the prime of their early manhood—blithe, hale, and hearty young giants—square-shouldered and broad-chested. They wore their big hearts upon their sleeves, so to say, and, after the untutored fashion of the country in

which they lived and roamed, they were little accustomed to conceal their thoughts.

"Do yew know, Bill," said Bob, totally regardless of the fact that the object of his observations could hear every word he spoke, "that's a mighty hensum young woman, an' I'll go the whole hog she's a good 'un too! She's just the sort as would take the bark off the whole sniggerin' herd of 'em at the Fort an' along the creek. What's she a doin' down thar?"

With that he stood stock still, leaning on his rifle and looking down into the canyon, as if some magic crystal or some mysterious fairy attracted his gaze. The other slapped him on the back, nearly causing him to lose his balance, and to tumble headlong down the terrible precipice.

"Pick up yer legs, Bob," he cried, with a mocking laugh. "Gosh! Yew're jest gone on the wimin yew are. Let's git the ram. We ain't out gal-huntin', I reckon."

The two young men walked carefully along the ridge, Bob keeping his eyes fixed upon Jess all the while. The young woman had returned to the fire in front of the rough hut, and was attending to her cooking in the most unconcerned manner possible, barely turning her head now and then to watch the progress of the two men.

The hunters easily reached the spot where the

mountain streamlet flung itself from the height of a hundred and fifty yards or more over the sheer rocks into the valley below, a pearling streak of seething snow-white spray. On the plateau above the water was but two or three feet deep, and only a few yards behind the edge of the mountain face, rocks and boulders, standing out black amid the surging turmoil, made an easy, if slippery, crossing.

The frontiersmen found it simple enough to get to the other bank, but then their difficulties commenced The dead ram was lying on its side on a narrow ledge of rock some twenty-five or thirty feet below the top of the ridge, and to descend, except by means of a rope, seemed an impossibility to any creature not provided with wings. The girl had, to all appearances, greatly under-rated the danger. The young men contemplated the spot with anything but satisfaction, for, though Jess had shown them the way so far, they had evidently come to the end of a possible means of safe approach.

"I'll tell yew what," said Bob, lying flat on his belly and looking down the sheer mountain side. "I can see a way along those bits o' rock. I can hold on by the bushes. That gal said yew could git to it, an' whar a gal can git, a man can. An' thar's more. Yew can put yewr lasso round me underneath my arms, an' if I do tumble, yew've jest got to hold on

like mad, an' tug like a buffler with an arrow in his back, an' yew've got to pull me up, old sonnie, that's all."

"It wouldn't be fallin' on a bed o' roses, Bob, if yew did drop," replied the other, "that it wouldn't, an' no snakes." With that he untied the rope he had coiled around his waist, and, drawing out the running loop, swung it over his companion's head. The latter adjusted the lasso around his chest, and drew the knot tightly.

"I'll have to look purty smart, even with this fixin'," he said with a smile, "else we might both go down thar an' pay a visit to that young woman, a leg an' an arm at a time."

To men accustomed to rough mountaineering, a descent such as the young fellow was about to make after his quarry was of every day occurrence. If beset with dangers begotten of missed footings or loose stones, it was just the sort of daring work for which their iron nerves, their whalebone thew and sinew, and their eagle eyes fitted them with peculiar aptitude. Boys in their teens would climb up nearly perpendicular fastnesses after birds' nests or the young brood of a mountain vulture.

Bob climbed down the face of the gulch-side cat-like, clinging to the projecting slabs of feldspar that shone red here and there among the greyish purple

of the sandstone. Every bush afforded a welcome hold, and Bob reached the narrow, sloping, grass and fern-covered ledge on which the bighorn lay, without further loss than that of his hat, which he brushed off against a bush. He saw, with surprised regret, his headgear sail away into the midst of the hazy spray of the waterfall, and reappear, a second or two afterwards, amid the eddying foam at the bottom, whence it rushed along the little stream until it was taken out of the water by Jess.

The young fellow had been so fully occupied looking after his hat and at Jess, thinking that the loss of his headgear might, after all, be a fortune in disguise, and, hoping that it would prove an excuse for a closer acquaintanceship with that hale, handsome, and strapping lass, that the prostrate bighorn might have been miles away for all the attention he paid to it. He was roused to a sense of what he was expected to do by Bill's voice calling to him to get on. But if the descent had been arduous, the ascent with such a load as that of the apparently dead animal would be of unparalleled difficulty. There was only one way to set about it, and the young hunter adopted that immediately.

"Yew'll have to pull him up, Bill, I reckon, an' I'll give him a shove or two behind," he shouted to his friend. "Thar ain't no other way"

With that he slipped the lasso from underneath his arms, and after some exertion, which was fraught with no little danger, he succeeded in tying it around the body of the huge mountain game.

"Now pull away, old hoss," he shouted, "pull away, an' I'll follow."

He jumped lightly aside as the young man above, having first of all twisted the rope around a young pine stem, commenced to tug away with all his might. Slowly and gradually the carcase moved, and swung from the ground, the head with its mighty horns drooping sideways. As the body was raised about three feet from the narrow ledge, the previously motionless animal became suddenly alive with the last throes of the stiffening nerves, and kicking out viciously and ferociously, struck the young frontiersman with both hind legs full in the stomach.

Bob, with a cry of pain, made a desperate effort to clutch a few slender shoots that sprang from the rocky side. Another kick, more fierce than the previous one, sent him staggering to the very edge of the precipice. An ineffectual grab at vacancy, and, with his arms writhing in the air, the unfortunate man reeled backward into space. Kindly fortune permitted him to alight among the great reeds, grasses and wild flowers that throve abundantly in

the interstices of the boulders amid the spray of the cascade some fifteen feet below. There he rolled as in agony for a second or so, and after vainly trying to clutch a rescuing hold among the rushes, he slid off and fell again; this time on to a slimy, moss-covered rock that was half hidden by the watery mist, and thence again into the very heart of the dropping column of water. There he disappeared from view, until his body was whirled, an inert blackish brown mass, among the angry snowy torrent at a point some thirty feet above the little valley, where the water, after its first mighty fall, seethed and roared for a space of some fifteen or eighteen feet, and then again flung itself down—this time to reach the canyon bottom, and to gurgle away angrily on its road to the Arkansas.

The miserable young fellow's companion was bending forward over the precipitous ridge, with frightened staring eyes and opened mouth, as if ready to leap after his friend. The rope had escaped from his trembling fingers and had fallen loosely on to the load at its further end. He made a movement as if to rush down the way his friend had just descended, but Jess waved her arms and stopped him.

"Yew cayn't do no good that way," she cried, "an' it'll take yew tew hours to get down into the canyon

from whar yew are if yew don't know the road, Bide up thar, an' I'll see what's to be done."

With the natural freedom of pure, untutored, and nearly savage maidenly innocence, she tucked her skirts up to her knees, and swinging herself from rock to rock, regardless and totally unaware of aught wrong or unvirginlike in the exposure to man's eyes of her shapely limbs, she climbed hand over hand up to the broad sandstone shelf, where the young frontiersman lay by the side of the foaming water, battered, bruised, and bleeding, with closed eyes, and but for his moving, bloodstained lips, limp and lifeless. Jess was strong. She had over and over again lifted a big goat or a young elk in her rounded arms, but the dead weight of a tall young hunter was a sad strain, and the most she could do was to drag him from the place where the water still dashed over him to a small strip where the high grass and ferns afforded a softer and drier resting place. As she did so, the young man moaned heavily, the movement evidently causing him great pain. She wiped his lips and his forehead with her handkerchief, and Bob opened his eyes and looked at her vacantly. Then the head rolled back and he lay still.

"I cayn't carry him down alone," she said to herself, "that's sartain sure, and he may be dead an' gone afore that young man up thar can git down,"

She was about to cry out, "Dad," when, on looking down, she saw her father's shaggy grey head protruding from underneath the shed. The old man was lying flat on his stomach, and his shifty eyes gleamed out of the semi-darkness at his daughter. He had been watching the whole scene and was staring, now at Jess, then at the young man on the top of the ridge. He anticipated his daughter's call, and shook his bony fist at her, motioning her to silence, while his flashing white teeth betrayed his emotion and his anger.

"I cayn't let him die, though, like a bar in a trap," said the girl to herself. "What in heaven's name's to be done?"

Bill, in the meantime, had witnessed the young woman's fruitless efforts, and had equally noticed her father, and his movements.

"Why don't yew crawl out of yewr hole, an' help the gal, yew old son of a seahorse?" he cried, in his rage. "Or, dog-dern it, tell me the way. Ain't yew got a heart in your belly, to let a poor devil break his neck, an' rot, an' die without liftin' a finger? Yew ain't lame, an' yew ain't blind, I guess. Move!" he added, imperiously, "or, by Jingo, if I'll come down to yew, yew'll wish yew had moved."

The long, gaunt, white-faced, grey-bearded figure rose slowly and glared at the young man above.

"I want nothin' from yew," the old man exclaimed fiercely, with outstretched shaking forefinger, "an' don't yew ask nothin' from me. Yew go yewr way, an' leave me an' mine alone. And as for yewr threats," he cried, gripping the rifle that was leaning against the side of the shed, and cocking it savagely, "I can shoot as clean as yew, old as I am, so yew jest git."

"But, hang it," remonstrated the young fellow above, "yew won't let a fellow-creature die like a dog in a ditch, without raisin' a hand. If yew won't help, tell me how I can git down."

"Yew'll have to come and help me, dad," said the girl, softly, "he's dyin'—I'm sure he is—an' I don't know much about these things. Come, dad, yew ain't as hard-hearted as yew make yewrself out to be. Come, dad, an' God'll bless you for it—we're none too well off in that line, dad."

The tremulous, melodious voice seemed to touch the old man soothingly, for he quietly replaced the rifle, and wringing his hands hard, muttered in a hoarse anguish—

"If it's got to be, it's got to be. Now is as wall as any other day. I'm sick of it anyhow, an' Jess will be all the better off when I'm gone. All right, my gal," he exclaimed, quietly, the hard savagery gone out of his voice, and in half-choking, broken accents,

"I'll help yew bring him down; and yew, young man," he continued, rousing his energies, "run an' fetch somebody as can dress his wounds, for I ain't much of a hand at it. But yew'll have to travel by the way of Boiling Spring Gulch when yew do come, an' that's a good sixteen mile round, but it's the quickest. Yew'll have to come along the bed o' the stream, right through the water at the Hole in the Cloud Chasm, an' that's fourteen mile from hyar. That's the only way, an' yew musn't mind gettin' in up to yewr armpits. Now yew know as much about my place as I do, an yew've found out what I've kept from all the world this five year."

The young trapper dashed into the plantation of young pines on the top of the ridge and was lost from sight the moment afterwards.

The old man walked to the side of the waterfall with slow and measured steps, and then swung himself upwards with a lithe and wiry activity totally out of keeping with his wasted and aged appearance, and without the strain of a heavily-drawn breath. Standing by his daughter he looked at the prostrate figure of the young man for one brief instant, and sadly shook his grey locks.

"I reckon we're jest in time to be no good, Jess," he whispered. "He's fixed, an' the grass'll grow over him afore many days."

He knelt down to get a closer view of his face. The feverish nerves twitched and throbbed and the lips opened and closed, as if parched and thirsting for moisture.

As he bent over the young hunter some awful fascination gripped the old man. His eyes glared with a horror-stricken frenzy, and protruded from their sockets. His teeth rattled as in ague, and his hands shook agonisedly.

"What's up, dad?" asked the girl, wonderingly.

Slowly he rose—his eyes fixed upon the young frontiersman, and the trembling forefinger pointing at the latter.

"Look!" he said to the girl, in a half-mad quiet stolidity. "Look! That's Bob McKinley! Look at him. Yew don't know him. Yew don't recognise him. I do. He was a strip of a lad when yew last seed him. That's Bob McKinley, an' I killed Dar McKinley, Bob's father. An' he's a dyin' hyar, right afore my face, or dead maybe." His voice rose in its anguish. "Dead, maybe," he repeated chattering. "Dead, hyar afore my face, an' I—I killed his father. I shot him down like a dog, like a wolf, an' left him to rot on the prairie. Don't let me look at him, Jess," he cried, with averted face. "Don't let me see him. He burns my eyes; he stings me.

Take him away! Hide him! hide him! Hide him from me!"

A hoarse terror choked his utterance. He buried his face in his shaking hands, and bent his head forward so that his shaggy grey hairs touched the ground.

She stooped over him, and threw her arms around his neck caressingly, and gently drew up his face until she could lay it against her own, and kissed him again and again.

"Don't go on, dad," she whispered. "Yew did it, an' it's got to come to yew now an' agin. That's God's judgment, that is, an' it can't be did without. But be a man! Rouse yourself. Yew killed his dad, poor man—wall, help me to save the boy, an' make what amends yew can."

She kissed him again—so softly and so quietly—while the hot tears streamed down her face.

Thus holy is woman's mission. Thus consecrated to man's salvation a good woman's duty. Seldom is the human beast so utterly lost to all feeling for his kind that the velvet touch of woman's sympathy cannot exert a grateful and beneficent influence.

He sprang to his feet.

"Yew're right, Jess," he said. "Yew're a good gal, an' yew're always right. Let's carry him down an' lose no time, for thar ain't none to spare."

Those lean, sinewy, and apparently senile arms were endowed with a muscular strength out of all proportion to their size, for he lifted the dead weight as if it were a mere trifle, and did it gently and carefully. Then, whilst the girl guided and aided him, and here and there relieved him of the severest drag of his load, he descended into the valley.

A bed of leaves covered with a worn and used blanket was speedily prepared, and upon that soft couch they laid the still unconscious young man. Jess, with a knife, ripped away his clothing so as to avoid moving him and giving him unnecessary pain, and even the first superficial observation proved speedily that at least two of his ribs were broken, and that his left arm was badly fractured. There was an ugly wound at the side of his head, where the scalp was torn into shreds and bled profusely. That had been produced, luckily, by the merely grazing contact of a rock, and looked far worse than it actually was.

Relieved from the touch of his hot and blood-stained clothing, and soothed by the grateful influence of the cold mountain water, applied by soft, delicate, and dainty fingers, Bob McKinley's breathing became steadier and more regular, and, by-and-bye, he opened his eyes and looked about him with a pained wonderment.

"Oh, how it does hurt," he breathed, "an' yew are good, yew are."

He glanced around him for a minute or more, and then his eyelids drooped and closed again.

They bathed his wounds as best they could, and dressed them with such rude and primitive appliances as were at their disposal. Then, as the sun was rising higher and would soon shine on the young man's face, they set up some short poles slant ways and threw skins over them, thus providing a welcome screen.

During the whole of that afternoon and of the evening that followed, the old outlaw sat on a small block of wood by the wounded man's side, with his arms resting on his knees and his hands glued against his cheeks, staring in front of him in a disturbed day dream. He hardly moved sufficiently to munch the strips of cooked meat which his daughter brought to him, and he passed full half an hour in tearing bit after bit from the piece which he held in his bare hand, and in chewing them slowly.

In the meanwhile, Jess never ceased in her efforts to alleviate the sufferer's pain. Her ready woman's wit and her anxious solicitude found a dozen ingenious devices, all equally grateful and soothing.

As the sun rose in its midday glory, and its rays bathed the whole valley with their warmth, young

McKinley's consciousness returned, and he was able, in answer to the girl's questioning, to point to places on his bruised and broken body that required most immediate aid and attention. In the indomitable cheerfulness of his youth, in spite of his great hurts, his good spirits bubbled genially when he saw his beautiful nurse so tenderly busied about him.

"It's worth a fellow's breakin' a rib or two, with an arm throwed in," he whispered, as in the rosy evening Jess sat by him and bent over him, "to git such a gal as yew to look after him. I shouldn't like to try that jump agin; but now it's done, an' I guess I ain't goin' to go under this time, I ain't more'n haf sorry that ram did kick me in the stomach."

She smiled at this primitive and unforced compliment. She was but a woman after all, and the most savage of her sex is seldom displeased by well-intentioned flattery.

Twilight is but short in the depths of these mountain astnesses, mere rents cleft by some awsome power into the heart of the eternal rocks. The sky overhead remains bright and blue, but down in the gulches the light is shut out as by a vast darkening veil, suddenly and swiftly drawn across the face of heaven. The moonlight only reaches these spots when the queen of the night rides straight above,

and where her silvery rays do not touch, the shadows are inky black.

The old man and the young one were both asleep —the first huddled up in his blanket in his corner of the rough hut, now and then stirring uneasily, and muttering hoarsely in his disturbed dreams— the latter, on his bed of leaves, moving feverishly at times. The girl sat watching in the darkness, thinking of her father, upon whose shoulder the hand of stern justice was about to lay her iron grip, and thinking none the less all the while of the handsome young frontiersman whom fate had treated so cruelly, and yet—who knew?—perhaps kindly. She was hoping and praying that she might find mercy for her old dad in the hearts of the hard men who would come on an errand of mercy, and would most likely do the work of vengeance. She would plead with them, and she was sure that the lad whom she and her father had saved from imminent death would help her to plead also. Yea, there was a warm prompting that sprang from her innermost soul that told her to hope. They would not take her aged father from her. He had been guilty— but that was so long ago, and he was so heartily sorry for it now. Yes; that boy whose life her father had stayed in its flight, would, in his turn, help her to save her dad.

On a sudden the faint, distant sounds of men's voices travelling along the lower part of the canyon reached her watchful ear. Soon the monotonous clatter of hoofs plodding along steadily and guardedly over the rough stones became equally audible, and Jess, running by the side of the stream, safe in her intimate knowledge of the place, came upon half-a-dozen men who were guiding two mules along the dangerous and difficult path. In the darkness that prevailed it was impossible to distinguish faces, but Jess quickly understood that one tall old man was the leader of the party. Over and over again she endeavoured to obtain a glimpse of his features, but the darkness was but seldom broken by the faint light of the moon that shyly and tremblingly reached the bottom of the canyon.

They had all arrived safely at the end of the little valley where the outlaw lived, when, on a sudden, the moon rising over the uneven mountain ridge, swathed the gulch as in a glittering gauze of fairy light. The waterfall and the foaming torrent fairly sparkled as with millions upon millions of tiny diamonds, and every blade of grass, every leaf, every flower, and every gracefully-drooping fern was edged with silver sheen.

Jess led the tall, elderly man, and the young friend who had brought the succour, to where the sufferer

lay, and without the loss of many seconds, experienced aid and attention was being given the wounded man.

The noise had reached the sleeping outlaw's ears, and, rolling round upon his bed, he looked haggardly at the men that were standing about. Then, as if struck by some inconceivable awe, he raised himself on his arms and stared breathlessly.

The elderly leader of the party turned, and Jess's father jumped up with a wild, unearthly yell.

"Out of my sight!" he cried. "Yew're dead, Dan McKinley! Don't come back to me, yew're dead!"

They all started back in amazement, and the old frontiersman, advancing a step or two, paused for the space of a few brief instants, and then said, quietly—

"No, I ain't dead, Ned Williams, though it ain't no thanks to yew. If it hadn't bin for Owatannah, the Sioux medicine man, who found me as good as gone on the boiling hot prairie, and carried me with him north o' the Platte, an' kep me thar nigh on two year, I should ha' bin dead."

The outlaw stared speechlessly under the shock of his wonder and his fright. Then he folded his hands, and held them high.

"Thank God for this mercy!" he cried fervently. "Thank God from whom all mercies come."

He drew himself up to his full height, and placed his hands behind his back.

"I know what yew're goin' to do with me, Dan McKinley," he said, quietly. "Go on; I'm ready."

"Wal," replied the other, after a pause, "I ain't so cocksure as yew do know what I'm goin' to do with yew. I did first of all mean to make you sing Geerusalem when I did come up with yew, an' meant it hard, but that's two or three year ago now, an' I've had time to bide it over in my mind, an' I ain't had no more spite agin yew than agin a bird in the air this long time past. An' we have bin a huntin' for yew—ask my boy Bill thar—he an' I, an' the boys, for ever so long to tell yew to come back. We've had our quarrel, an' I guess if yew hadn't shot me—wal, I might ha' shot yew—only I don't think I should ha' shot yew from behind; that was the only thing that kept me savidge. But yew've made up for it, an' saved my lad, so hyar's my hand upon it."

Bob McKinley recovered from the effects of his terrible fall, and, within a year after that, Jess Williams and he were the handsomest and happiest couple to be found anywhere on the prairies.

THE CARLYLE PRESS, 23—26, Charterhouse Square, and East Harding Street

Stirling, January 1895.

CATALOGUE

OF

COPYRIGHT WORKS

PUBLISHED BY

TRISCHLER & CO.,

18, NEW BRIDGE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

LIBRARY EDITIONS.

Twenty-one Shillings.

THE ROMANCE OF A STATION. Two vols. By Mrs. CAMPBELL-PRAED, Author of "Nadine," "Affinities," "Policy and Passion," "The Soul of Countess Adrian," &c. The *Daily Telegraph*, in speaking about Mrs. Praed's "Romance of a Station," says: "Her sketches of quaint bush characters are as good as ever, and the book is thoroughly amusing." The *Glasgow Herald* says: "The romance is very charmingly told."

HOLLY. Two vols. By "NOMAD," Author of "A Railway Foundling," "The Milroys," &c. In speaking of this author's last work, "A Railway Foundling," the *Daily Telegraph* says: "It is a story that must be read to be understood. There is vivacity and adventure in it, and, good as the authoress's previous work, 'The Milroys,' was, it is not too much to say this is better." The *Scotsman* says: "The readers among whom 'A Railway Foundling' and 'The Milroys' have been popular novels will probably be charmed with Nomad's new work of fiction. 'Holly' is as lively and artless, as light and readable as its predecessors."

Thirty-one Shillings and Sixpence.

HAVING AND HOLDING. Three vols. By Mrs. J. E. PANTON, Author of "From Kitchen to Garret," "The Curate's Wife," &c., &c. The *Manchester Guardian* says: "Mrs. Panton tells her story . . . . . with a good deal of power." *Academy* says: "It is a pleasant, wholesome tale, and no doubt profoundly interesting for those who delight in the details of political life under its social aspects."

NOW READY.

JARDYNE'S WIFE. Three vols. By C. J. WILLS, Author of "The Land of the Lion and Sun," "The Pit Town Coronet," &c., and joint-author of "A Maiden Fair to See." Thirty-one Shillings and Sixpence.

FRENCH FICTION OF TO-DAY. By Madame VAN DE VELDE, Author of "Random Recollections," "Dr. Greystone," &c., &c., with twelve portraits of French Authors.

Two vols. Twenty-one Shillings.

THE PRISONER OF CHILOANE. By WALLIS MACKAY. With 80 Illustrations by the Author. The *World* says: "A brightly written book." *Morning Post:* "Bright and attractive." The *Saturday Review:* "Mr. Mackay is as good with pencil as with pen." The *Scotsman:* "Written in a bright, spirited style, and the illustrations are full of fun and movement." The *Spectator:* "Much that is worth reading in Mr. Mackay's book."

Foolscap quarto, handsomely bound in cloth, bevelled edges, 7s. 6d.

THE VICTORIAN LIBRARY SERIES.

Six Shilling Novels, Postage Fivepence.

THE GOLDEN LAKE: A Story of Australian Adventure. By W. CARLTON DAWE, Author of "Zantha," &c. With eight full-page illustrations by HUME NISBET. *Morning Post:* "A welcome addition to the fiction treating of 'The Great Lone Land of Australia,' the effect of which is increased by Mr. Hume Nisbet's numerous illustrations." *Sunday Times:* "A very strong and well-written story of Australian life, told with a swing and 'go' which make it very entertaining reading." *Scotsman:* "A clever and entertaining narrative of travelling adventures in the unknown interior of Australia. Mr. Dawe's inventive talent is lively, and his literary faculty genuine."

Extra cloth, with bevelled boards.

A MAIDEN FAIR TO SEE. By F. C. PHILIPS, Author of "As in a Looking-Glass," and C. J. WILLS, Author of "In the Land of the Lion and Sun." Copiously Illustrated by G. A. STOREY, A.R.A. From the *Scotsman:* "The story is life-like, humorous, and clever. Everybody who reads the story will enjoy its tenderness and quiet fun." *Sunday Times:* "A most clever and readable story."

Foolscap quarto, beautifully bound, with gilt top.

DARELL BLAKE. By LADY COLIN CAMPBELL. Fifth thousand. Cloth bevelled boards extra. 272 pp. From the *Saturday Review:* "The character of Lady Colin Campbell's hero is intensely interesting. It reveals uncommon acuteness and freshness of observation, and that reserve of power which the possession and artistic control of power can alone suggest. Lady Colin Campbell is certainly gifted in the art, so like intuition it may well be intuition, that impels the unfaltering hand to stay at the right moment in the process of characterisation to give the required accent of light or nuance of shade, with the simple and delicate touch that is most effective."

Bevelled boards, extra cloth.

MIDGE. By Miss MAY CROMMELIN, Author of "Queenie," "Goblin Gold," "Dead Men's Dollars," "Mr. and Mrs. Herries," &c., &c. From the *Evening News and Post:* "There are some books the reading of which is like the scent of wild flowers in the heart of a smoke-laden city. They breathe of the wide fields, they are redolent of the honeysuckle, and they conjure up the songs of birds in the summer woods. There is no excitement in them; nothing sensational. But nature is there, and the reader feels refreshed. Such a book is 'Midge' by May Crommelin (Trischler and Co., 18, New Bridge Street, E.C.). It is an unpretentious idyll rather than a novel. It would be well indeed if we had more novels like this."

Bevelled boards, extra cloth gilt.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF GREAT BRITAIN; or, A WITCH'S CAVERN. By an Anonymous Author. In one volume, 291 pp. Crown octavo. Extra cloth.

IN THE PRESS. READY SHORTLY.

MR. AND MRS. HERRIES. By Miss MAY CROMMELIN, Author of "Midge," "Queenie," "Goblin Gold."

Bevelled boards. Cloth gilt.

THREE-AND-SIXPENNY NOVELS.

Now Ready, at all Libraries and Bookstalls.

LADY DELMAR. One vol. By THOMAS TERRELL and T. L. WHITE. This exciting Story of London Life has already been dramatised by Mr. SYDNEY GRUNDY. The *Daily Telegraph* says: "A remarkable novel." See also leading article on this dramatic story of human nature in *Daily Telegraph* of February 25. The *Daily News:* "A complex story of life in London, with many exciting incidents." *Piccadilly:* "'Lady Delmar' is distinctly a book to read; it is vivid with variety, culminating in interest, and original in treatment."

Handsomely bound in scarlet cloth.

ALWAYS IN THE WAY. By THOMAS JEANS, Author of "The Tommiebeg Shootings." New edition, with nine humorous and sporting **illustrations** by **Finch Mason.** The *Daily Telegraph* says: "'Always in the Way,' by Mr. Jeans, the author of 'The Tommiebeg Shootings,' is a series of sporting and travelling experiences, mostly humorously infelicitous, recounted in a rollicking, slapdash style, that has the merit of being uniformly vivacious and genuinely unaffected."

Cloth boards. Illustrated.

THE QUEEN OF THE BLACK HAND. By HUGH COLEMAN DAVIDSON, Author of "The Old Adam," "Cast on the Waters," "The Green Hills by the Sea," &c. Bevelled boards. Cloth gilt. The *Glasgow Herald* says: "The name of Hugh Coleman Davidson has become so well known to novel-readers that they know what to expect when he gives them a new book."

DOCTOR GREYSTONE. By Madame VAN DE VELDE. Third thousand. Bevelled boards. Cloth gilt. The *World* says: "'Dr. Greystone' is a clever and original book; and in these days of over-emphasis and exaggeration an author who can pass so quietly and simply over the scene in the prologue of the erring wife's death deserves high praise."

TRISCHLERS' SERIES OF TWO SHILLING AND SIXPENNY CLOTH & TWO SHILLING PICTURE BOARD NOVELS.

Crown Octavo. Price Two Shillings and Sixpence.

THE SOUL OF COUNTESS ADRIAN. By Mrs. CAMPBELL-PRAED, Author of "Nadine," "Affinities," "Policy and Passion," "Australian Heroine," "The Head Station," "The Romance of a Station," &c.

Cloth boards.

A RAILWAY FOUNDLING. By "NOMAD," Author of "The Milroys," &c., &c. The *Graphic* says: "The interest of the story ought to satisfy the most insatiable of appetites for tales of true lovers. We doubt if the most thorough-going disciple of Ruskin would not feel humanly touched by the 'navvy' as portrayed by 'Nomad.'"

Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

THE OLD ADAM. By HUGH COLEMAN DAVIDSON, Author of "The Queen of the Black Hand," &c. The *Spectator* says: "It is indeed a thoroughly good and interesting novel."

Cloth Boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

RECENTLY ISSUED.

THE BLACK DROP. By HUME NISBET, Author of "Bail Up," "A Colonial Tramp," "The Land of the Hibiscus Blossom," "Dr. Bernard," "St. Vincent," "Eight Bells," &c., &c. From the *Sunday Times:* "'The Black Drop' tells a strong story in a strong and straightforward way, and is thoroughly readable."

Extra Cloth. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

A VILLAGE PRIEST, THE ORIGINAL STORY OF. (Upon which is founded the successful play produced by Mr. Beerbohm Tree at the Haymarket Theatre.) By ALBERT D. VANDAM. *St. James's Gazette* says: "The story is graphic and well-told. We recommend the book for a quiet hour after dinner." The *Globe* says: "'A Village Priest' is the title given by Mr. Vandam to his translation, which in its attractive guise is sure to have many appreciative readers."

Extra cloth. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

NOW READY.

Picture boards. Two Shillings.

RITHERDON'S GRANGE. By SAUMAREZ DE HAVILLAND, Author of "Strange Clients." *Morning Post* says: "It is easily written, has enough of incident to supply a much more important work." *Vanity Fair* says: "A well-told tale. The requirements of the novel-reader are satisfied."

FORBIDDEN BY LAW. By BARRY COTTINGHAM. *Glasgow Herald* says: "It is well written, and the plot is interesting without being too complicated."

THE COPPER CRASH. By FRANK DANBY, Author of "Doctor Phillips," "A Babe in Bohemia." Seventh thousand. The *Sunday Times* says: "There are abundant tokens in this book of strong imaginative and descriptive powers, and of considerable knowledge of human nature." The *Evening News and Post* says: "It is sensational without being overdrawn, with a plot simple yet full of mystery, is well thought out and skilfully written."

A NASTY CROPPER. By G. F. UNDERHILL, Author of "In at the Death," &c. A realistic and sensational sporting story. The *Publisher's Circular* says: "It is a good story of sport, love, and revenge. The tale runs briskly, with plenty of incident, and a faithful reproduction of some of the serious flaws in the habits of modern society."

HEART WINS, THE AUSTRALIAN AUNT, and other Stories. By Mrs. ALEXANDER and others. Fifth thousand. The *United Service Gazette* says: "This volume, containing as it does no less than nine different stories besides the one mentioned in the title, supplies the existing demand for short stories by well-known authors, and it is better adapted as a companion on a railway or other journey than a continuous novel."

RUBY; or, How Girls are Trained for a Circus Life. By Miss AMYE READE. Illustrated by TALBOT HUGHES. This story is the foundation of an

inquiry now being made by certain Members of Parliament as to the Methods of Training Circus Children, with a view to bringing the matter immediately before the House. *Manchester Guardian* says: "'Ruby,' by Amye Reade. This book is notable on account of the charges brought by the authoress against a manager or managers in general of circuses. It is an indictment so tremendous that, if it can be proved, the authoress should not be content with representing a picture to harrow novel-readers. She should collect her proofs and lay them before the Public Prosecutor. Miss Reade asserts that in cases of contumacy girls of seventeen are stripped naked by the circus-master and flogged by him till they are sick and faint and bleeding."

IN CRIME'S DISGUISE. By F. C. MILFORD, Author of "What Became of Him," "Lost a Day," "Fifty-five Guineas Reward," &c., &c. The *Whitehall Review* says: "Mr. Milford has already made for himself a name in fiction, and in his present literary venture he adds very considerably to his well-earned reputation. He has never been guilty of the young author's usual mistake—*i.e.*, the frequent production of stories. Up to date he has but published three or four books, on the surface of which there is ample evidence of his having expended much care in the elaboration of his detail. The matter is sensational for the most part, but never ridiculous, and always carefully worked out, nothing being left to the imagination of the reader. In his present story he treats of a certain secret society in America, and weaves a very telling romance, with a complicated plot, round this centre. A book like this one is a godsend at this time of year, when 'all the world and his wife' are taking their pleasure away from their own comfortable homes, and are apt to find the days somewhat long and dreary. 'In Crime's Disguise' will serve to shorten the hours of many a rainy day, and has the peculiar merit of being fit for every one to read, and highly interesting withal."

IN THE PRESS. READY SHORTLY.

BITS OF CHINA (Les Plaisirs en Chine). By HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL TCHENG-KI-TONG, of the Chinese Legation in Paris. Translated by authority of His Excellency by R. H. Sherard, Author of "Agatha's Quest," "The Type-Written Letter," "Rogues," &c. The *Daily Telegraph*, in "Paris Day by Day," says: "General Tcheng-ki-Tong will 'strike oil' decidedly with his new book on the manners and customs of his countrymen. The worthy warrior is secretary at the Chinese Legation in Paris, and has been justly called the 'Chinese Boulevardier,' as his observations on men and things are such as might be expected from those butterfly beings who are popularly supposed to spend the most of their time sauntering up and down the asphalte between the Jockey Club and Tortoni's. In his latest contribution to Boulevard literature, the General descants on the various pleasures of his countrymen, and he describes everything more accurately than any foreign writer on the same subject could be expected to do. . . . General Tcheng-ki-Tong has many other interesting revelations to make about his people, and there is no doubt that this book will be read widely in France."

SCARLET FORTUNE and Short Story. By H. HERMAN, Author of the well-known dramas "Claudian," "Silver King,' &c., late collaborator with David Christie Murray.

THE PITY OF IT. By Mrs. MICHAEL SMITH. Cloth boards extra, Two Shillings and Sixpence; picture boards, Two Shillings.

NOTE.—This work was issued in Three-volume form ten years ago, when the following remarks were made by the Press—The *Times*, in criticising "The Pity of It," says: "The book is a clever book. Above all, it possesses one of the greatest merits of a story—it improves as it goes along, and so far from the interest flagging, in spite of heaped-up incidents, the plot unravels distinctly and clearly, while the various characters work out their fate without undue haste or lagging. . . . Never degenerates into impossible raving or retaliation."

ANECDOTAL BISMARCK. By ALBERT D. VANDAM, with Introduction by COUNT HERBERT BISMARCK, Author of "We Two at Monte Carlo," "Amours of Great Men," &c., &c.
Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

RICK; or, THE RÉCIDIVISTE. A Romance of Australian Life. By DAVID G. FALK, Author of "The Australians," &c., &c.
Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

FOLLY AND FRESH AIR. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS, Author of "The End of a Life."
Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

THROUGH DEEP WATERS. By THURZA.
Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

TO BE ISSUED SHORTLY. CHEAP EDITION OF THE SUCCESSFUL NOVEL.

THE PIT TOWN CORONET. A Family Mystery. By C. J. WILLS, Author of "Jardyne's Wife," "In the Sunny South of France" (*Atalanta*). The *Spectator* says: "There is a great deal of real cleverness in the book. The characters are all alive, the conversations are exceedingly bright and natural; there is in the novel a genuine vein of somewhat pungent humour, and the style has for the most part both vigour and accuracy. . . . . The characters are very fresh and amusing, notably Justice Haggard, whose livelong ambition is to breed the ideal pig; the mildly amorous and vigorously henpecked clergyman, Mr. Dodd, and his energetic, vinegary spouse, who may almost be said to run a good second to the immortal Mrs. Proudie."
Cloth boards. Two Shillings and Sixpence.

ANNALS OF THE HORSE SHOE CLUB. By FINCH MASON, with numerous Sporting Illustrations by himself.
Picture boards. Two Shillings.

TRISCHLERS' SHILLING LIBRARY.

Illustrated Picture Covers. Crown Octavo.

WORKS BY FERGUS HUME.

THE MYSTERY OF A HANSOM CAB. 353rd thousand. 230 pp.

MADAME MIDAS. 150th thousand. 222 pp.

THE GIRL FROM MALTA. 58th thousand. 192 pp., with portrait of Author.

WORKS BY JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

HARVEST. Fifty-first thousand.

DINNA FORGET. Thirty-fifth thousand.

TRUE DETECTIVE STORIES, Vol. I. By INSPECTOR MOSER, late Superintendent Criminal Investigation Department, Scotland Yard. Twenty-fifth thousand, with portrait of Author.

THE BLOOD WHITE ROSE. By B. L. FARJEON. Thirty-fifth thousand, with portrait of Author.

MY WEIRD WOOING. By T. Vicars Foote. Fifteenth thousand.

SPORTING STORIES. By Finch Mason. Tenth thousand.

THE CROOKED BILLET. By Vero Shaw.

A SOCIETY SCANDAL. By Rita, Author of "Sheba," "The Mystery of a Turkish Bath," &c. Eleventh thousand.

HAND OF VENGEANCE. By G. F. Underhill, Author of "In at the Death," "A Nasty Cropper."

AGATHA'S QUEST. By Robert Sherard, Author of "Rogues." Fifteenth thousand.

THE TYPE-WRITTEN LETTER. By R. H. Sherard, Author of "Agatha's Quest," "Rogues," &c., &c.

UNDER THE GUM-TREES, and other Stories. Solely by Australian Authors, with two stories by Mrs. Campbell Praed. Edited by Mrs. Patchett Martin.

A NEW LIGHT THROWN ACROSS THE "KEEP-IT-QUITE-DARKEST-AFRICA." By F. C. Burnand. A Humorous and Satirical Burlesque of Mr. H. M. Stanley's "Darkest Africa." Sixth edition. 38th thousand.

FLIGHT. By J. J. Britton.

A LUCKY YOUNG WOMAN. By F. C. Philips, Author of "As in a Looking-Glass," "The Dean and his Daughter," "Social Vicissitudes," &c., &c. In limp cloth.

THE WITNESS BOX. By Collis Karsland and Veva Karsland. Seventh thousand.

THE ROMANCE OF A LAWN-TENNIS TOURNAMENT. By Lady Dunboyne.

FOR THE DEFENCE. By B. L. Farjeon, Author of "The Blood White Rose." Fifteenth thousand.

PRIZE NOVEL—£30, £15, or £5 offered for best solution of mystery.

THE ONLY WITNESS: WHAT DID SHE SEE? By E. J. Goodman, Author of "Hobson's Hoard." For particulars of competition see first page of book.

DAZZLED. By Houghton Townley. *Daily Telegraph* says: "Has strong dramatic situations."

MORE SOCIAL VICISSITUDES. By F. C. Philips, Author of "As in a Looking-Glass," "A Lucky Young Woman," &c., &c.

IN LIFE—IN DEATH. By Arthur Gay.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE IN BERKELEY SQUARE. By Edric Vredenberg, Author of "Her Secret."

ATALANTA.

MONTHLY MAGAZINE, ARTISTICALLY ILLUSTRATED.

Price 6d.

Editor, Mrs. L. T. MEADE.

Among the contributors for 1890-91 are—Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, Author of "Little Lord Fauntleroy;" Frank Stockton, Author of "Rudder Grange;" Mrs. Molesworth, L. B. Walford, Lady Lindsay, Mrs. Parr, Katharine Macquoid, C. J. Wills. Illustrations from Burne Jones, P. H. Newman, Thomas Macquoid, Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A.

NOW READY.

ATALANTA.

VOLUME III. A GIFT BOOK.

This volume consists of 800 pages, beautifully printed on highly finished paper, with 400 illustrations by the first English and Foreign artists. Imperial 8vo, handsomely bound in extra cloth, 8s.

The *Spectator* says: "*Atalanta* deserves a special word of welcome among the yearly volumes of magazines. It may fairly claim to equal, if not surpass all its English competitors; it may well challenge comparison with magazines from the other side of the Atlantic."

BUDGET 1890 REDUCTION.

UNPARALLELED ! ! !

Packoo Revolution in the Price of Tea

Packoo BARBER AND Packoo COMPANY are now enabled to Offer to the Packoo Public a Good, Pure, Pungent Leaf Congo, Packoo at 1s. 2d., formerly 1s. 4d. per lb. Packoo Unequalled and Superseding everything hitherto Packoo offered at the Price. Packoo 2½ lb. (sample) Free by Post for 3s. 5d.; 4½ lb., 6s.; Packoo 6½ lb., 8s. 7d.; 8½ lb., 11s. 2d.; 10 lb., 13s. 2d.

A Luxury NO LONGER UNKNOWN.

A Luxury BARBER AND A Luxury COMPANY'S "See that you have none other." A Luxury FRENCH COFFEE as used in Paris, in its Highest A Luxury Perfection, One Shilling per Pound, including A Luxury Tin. This is the Choicest and most A Luxury Carefully Selected Coffee Roasted on the French Principle, A Luxury and mixed with the finest Bruges Chicory. A Luxury 2 lb. sample (in tins) sent free per A Luxury Parcels Post for 2s. 6d., and 5 lbs. for 6s., to any post town in the A Luxury United Kingdom and Channel Islands.

Onfa "Never" Sold in England before at the Price.

Onfa BARBER AND Onfa COMPANY'S Onfa Rich Syrupy ONFA CONGO. Onfa "The Pick of this Season's Growth. Onfa 1s. 4d., formerly One Shilling and Sixpence per Pound. Onfa "A Tea abounding in Strength and High Qualities." Onfa 2½ lb. Sample free per Parcels Post for 3s. 10d. Onfa 4½ lb. for 6s. 9d. 6½ lb. for 9s. 8d., 8½ lb. for 12s. 7d. 10 lb. for 14s. 10d. to any post town in the Onfa United Kingdom and Channel Islands.

No Charge for Carriage of Larger Parcels of Tea in England.

FINE PURE CEYLON or ASSAM TEA. 1s. 10d., formerly 2s. per pound,

2½ Pounds Sample free by post for 5s. Id.

BARBER & COMPANY,

ESTABLISHED IN THE LAST CENTURY, AND THEIR ONLY ADDRESSES ARE

274, Regent Circus, Oxford St., W. The Borough, London Bridge, S.E.
42, Great Titchfield Street, W. 61, Bishopsgate Street, E.C.
102, Westbourne Grove, W. King's Cross, N. 67, Brixton Road, S.W.

ALSO

Brighton, Hastings, Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool, Preston, & Birmingham.

Cheques to be crossed "London and Westminster Bank."

Postal Orders from 1s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. may now be had for Id. from all Post Offices.

Diarrhœa

Cholera

Dysentery

Fevers

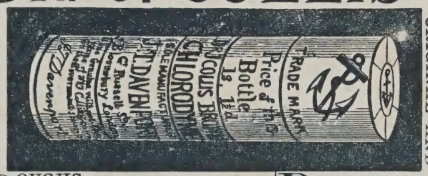
Ague

Spasms

etc.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE

ONLY GENUINE.



ORIGINAL AND

IS THE GREAT SPECIFIC FOR CHOLERA,

COUGHS, COLDS, ASTHMA, BRONCHITIS.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE. — Dr. J. C. BROWNE (late Army Medical Staff) DISCOVERED a REMEDY to denote which he coined the word CHLORODYNE. Dr. Browne is the SOLE INVENTOR, and, as the composition of Chlorodyne cannot possibly be discovered by Analysis (organic substances defying elimination), and since the formula has never been published, it is evident that any statement to the effect that a compound is identical with Dr. Browne's Chlorodyne *must be false.*

This Caution is necessary, as many persons deceive purchasers by false representations.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE. — Vice Chancellor Sir W. PAGE WOOD stated publicly in Court that Dr. J. COLLIS BROWNE was UNDOUBTEDLY the INVENTOR of CHLORODYNE, that the whole story of the defendant Freeman was deliberately untrue, and he regretted to say it had been sworn to. —See *The Times*, July 13th, 1864.

DIARRHŒA, DYSENTERY. GENERAL BOARD of HEALTH, London, REPORT that it ACTS as a CHARM, one dose generally sufficient. Dr. GIBBON, Army Medical Staff, Calcutta, states: "2 DOSES COMPLETELY CURED ME of DIARRHŒA."

From SYMES & Co., Pharmaceutical Chemists, Simla. *Jan.* 5, 1880.

To J. T. DAVENPORT, London.

DEAR SIR,—We congratulate you upon the widespread reputation this justly-esteemed medicine has earned for itself all over the East. As a remedy of general utility, we much question whether a better is imported, and we shall be glad to hear of its finding a place in every Anglo-Indian home. The other brands, we are happy to say, are now relegated to the native bazaars, and, judging from their sale, we fancy their sojourn there will be but evanescent. We could multiply instances *ad infinitum* of the extraordinary efficacy of DR. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE in Diarrhœa and Dysentery, Spasms, Cramps, Neuralgia, the Vomiting of Pregnancy, and as a general sedative, that have occurred under our personal observation during many years. In Choleraic Diarrhœa, and even in the more terrible forms of Cholera itself, we have witnessed its surprisingly controlling power.

We have never used any other form of this medicine than Collis Browne's, from a firm conviction that it is decidedly the best, and also from a sense of duty we owe to the profession and the public, as we are of opinion that the substitution of any other than Collis Browne's is a deliberate breach of faith on the part of the chemist to prescriber and patient alike.—We are, Sir, faithfully yours, SYMES & CO., *Members of the Pharm. Society of Great Britain, His Excellency the Viceroy's Chemists.*

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE is the TRUE PALLIATIVE in

NEURALGIA, GOUT, CANCER, TOOTHACHE, RHEUMATISM.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE is a liquid medicine which assuages PAIN of EVERY KIND, affords a calm, refreshing sleep WITHOUT HEADACHE, and INVIGORATES the nervous system when exhausted.

DR. J. COLLIS BROWNE'S CHLORODYNE rapidly cuts short all attacks of

EPILEPSY, SPASMS, COLIC, PALPITATION, HYSTERIA.

IMPORTANT CAUTION. — The IMMENSE SALE of this REMEDY has given rise to many UNSCRUPULOUS IMITATIONS. Be careful to observe Trade Mark. Of all Chemists, 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 6d.

SOLE MANUFACTURER,
J. T. DAVENPORT, 33, Gt. Russell-st., W.C.

Coughs

Colds

Asthma

Bronchitis

Toothache

Neuralgia

FURNISH THROUGHOUT (REGD)

OETZMANN & CO.,

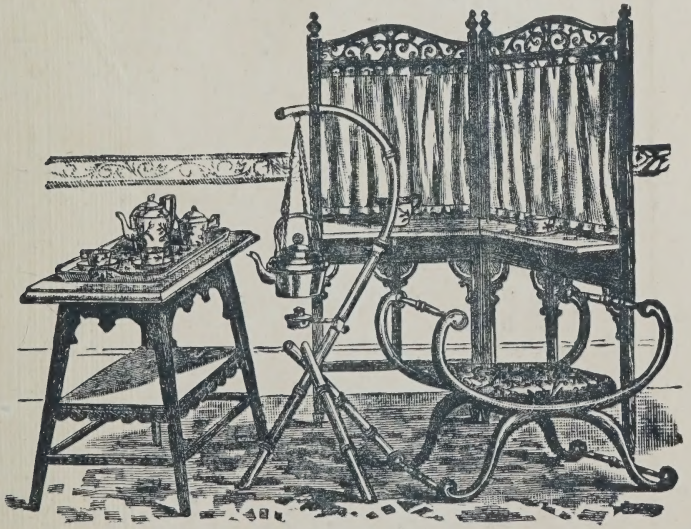
67, 69, 71, 73, 75, 77, & 79,

HAMPSTEAD ROAD,

NEAR TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, LONDON.

CARPETS, FURNITURE, BEDDING, DRAPERY,
FURNISHING IRONMONGERY, CHINA, GLASS, &c.

ORDERS PER POST RECEIVE PROMPT AND CAREFUL ATTENTION.



WALNUT OR MAHOGANY TEA SCREEN, with two folding flaps, and Art Silk Panels, 37s. 6d.

SHAPED WALNUT SEAT, upholstered in Silk or Tapestry, 28s. 6d.

WALNUT OR MAHOGANY OCCASIONAL TABLE, 29s. 6d.

OETZMANN & CO.'S "REGISTERED" BAMBOO STAND, fitted with Artistic Kettle (3 pints) in brass and copper, on chains, and with patent wind-up brass Lamp and Holder, complete, 21s.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE, THE BEST GUIDE EXTANT, POST FREE.

Pears' Soap

I have found it matchless for the hands and complexion

Adelina Patti

Since using Pears' Soap I have discarded all others.

Ellie Jansbry

For preserving the Complexion, keeping the skin soft, free from redness and roughness, and the hands in nice condition, it is the finest Soap in the world

M. Fortescue